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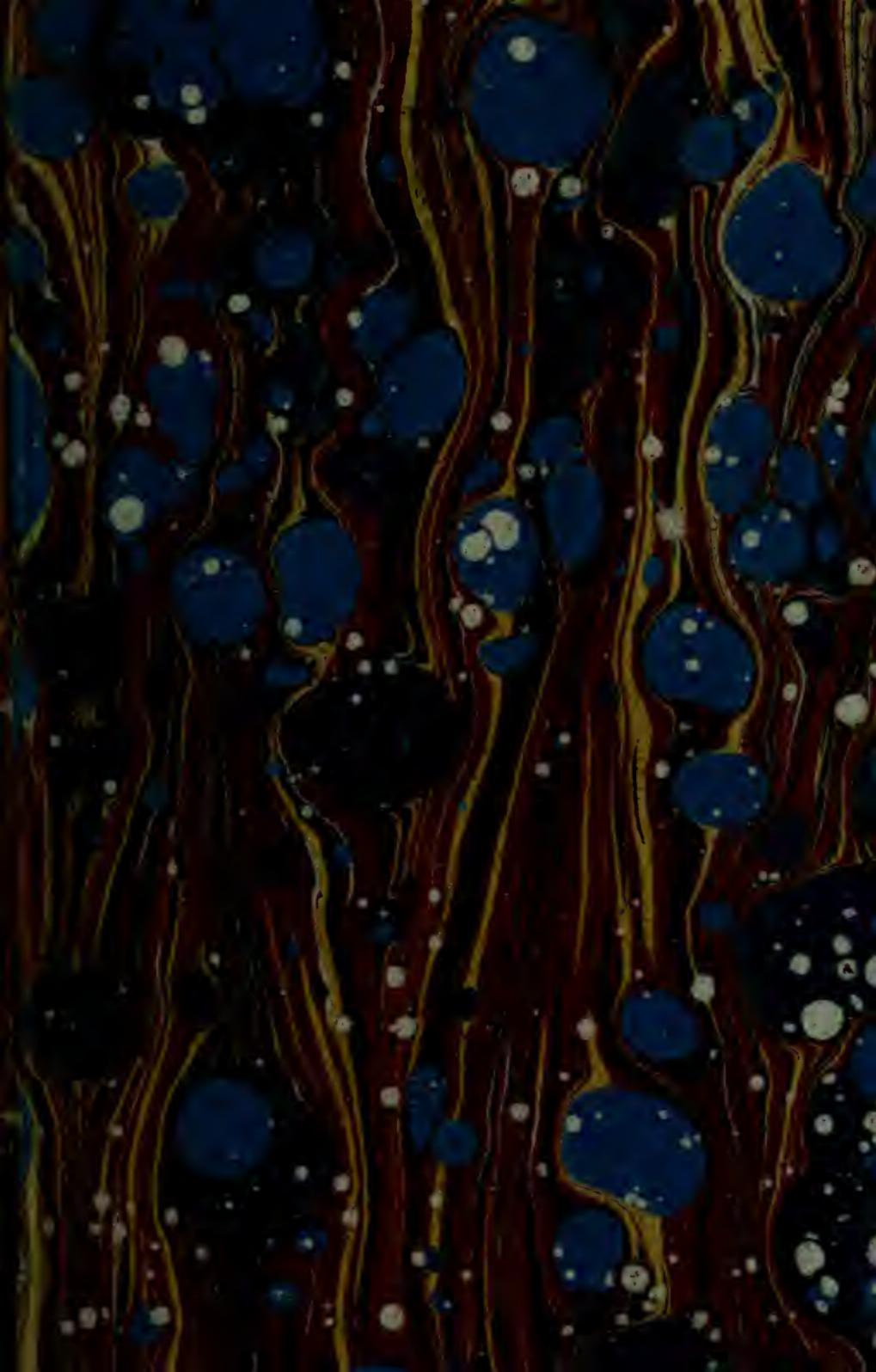


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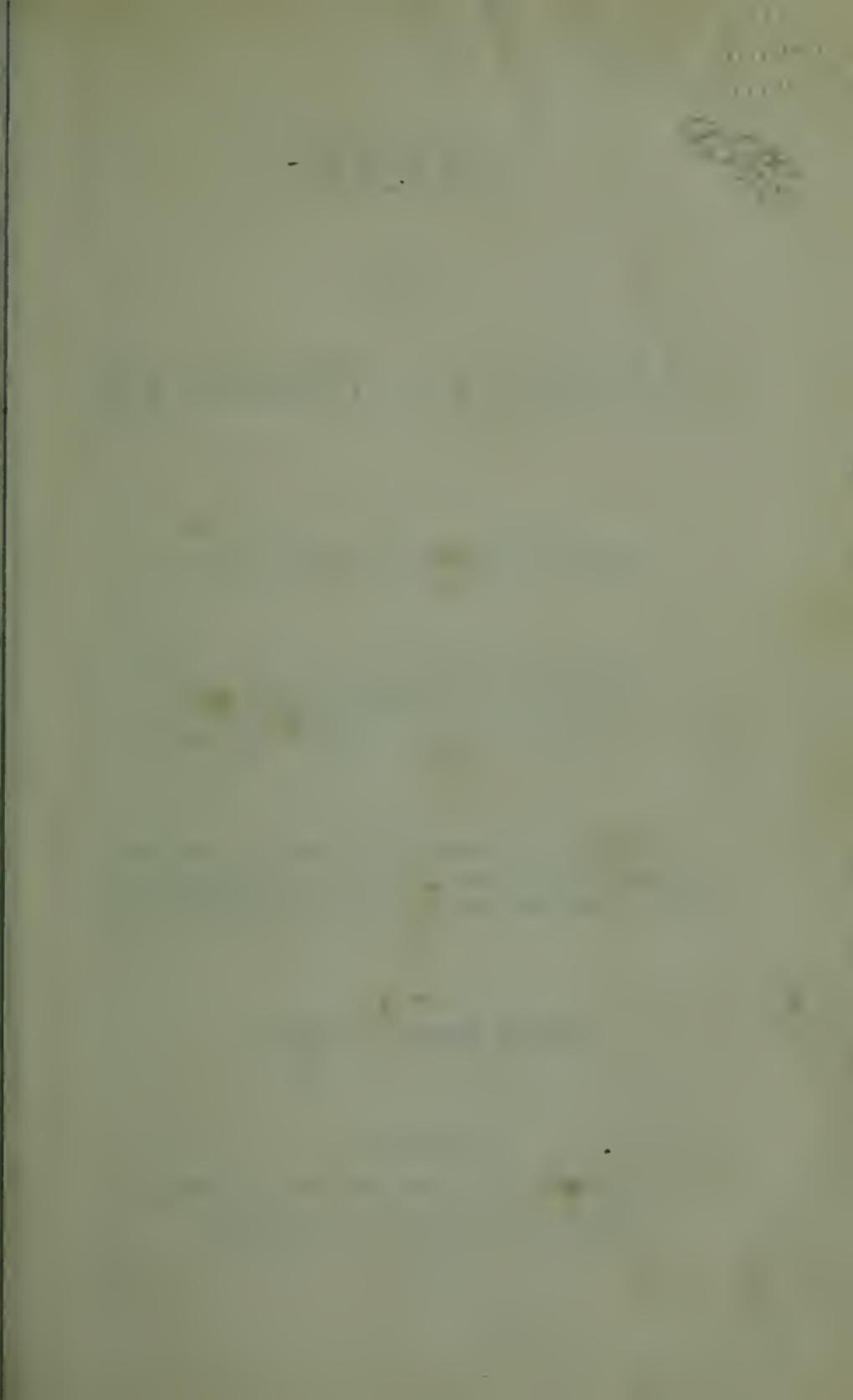
FOR
*Divinity & general
Progress*
BY

*L. R. Humphreys Esq.
Head Master*
Jul. 10. 1854

PATES'
GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
CHELTENHAM.



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HINTS

FOR THE
EARNEST STUDENT;

OR,

A YEAR-BOOK FOR THE YOUNG.

BY MRS. WILLIAM FISON,

AUTHOR OF "LETTERS FROM THE CONTINENT," ETC.

"Whosoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—1 Cor. x. 31.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."—Col. iii. 17.

Second and Revised Edition.

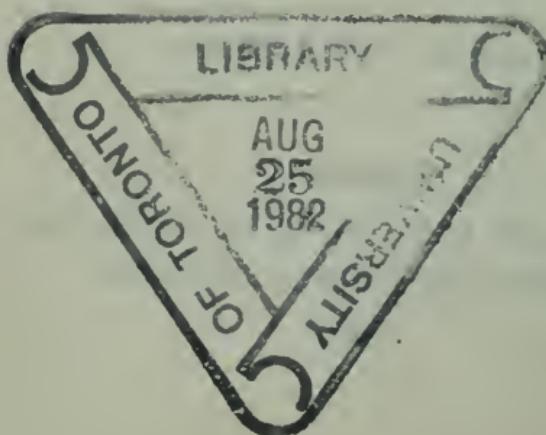
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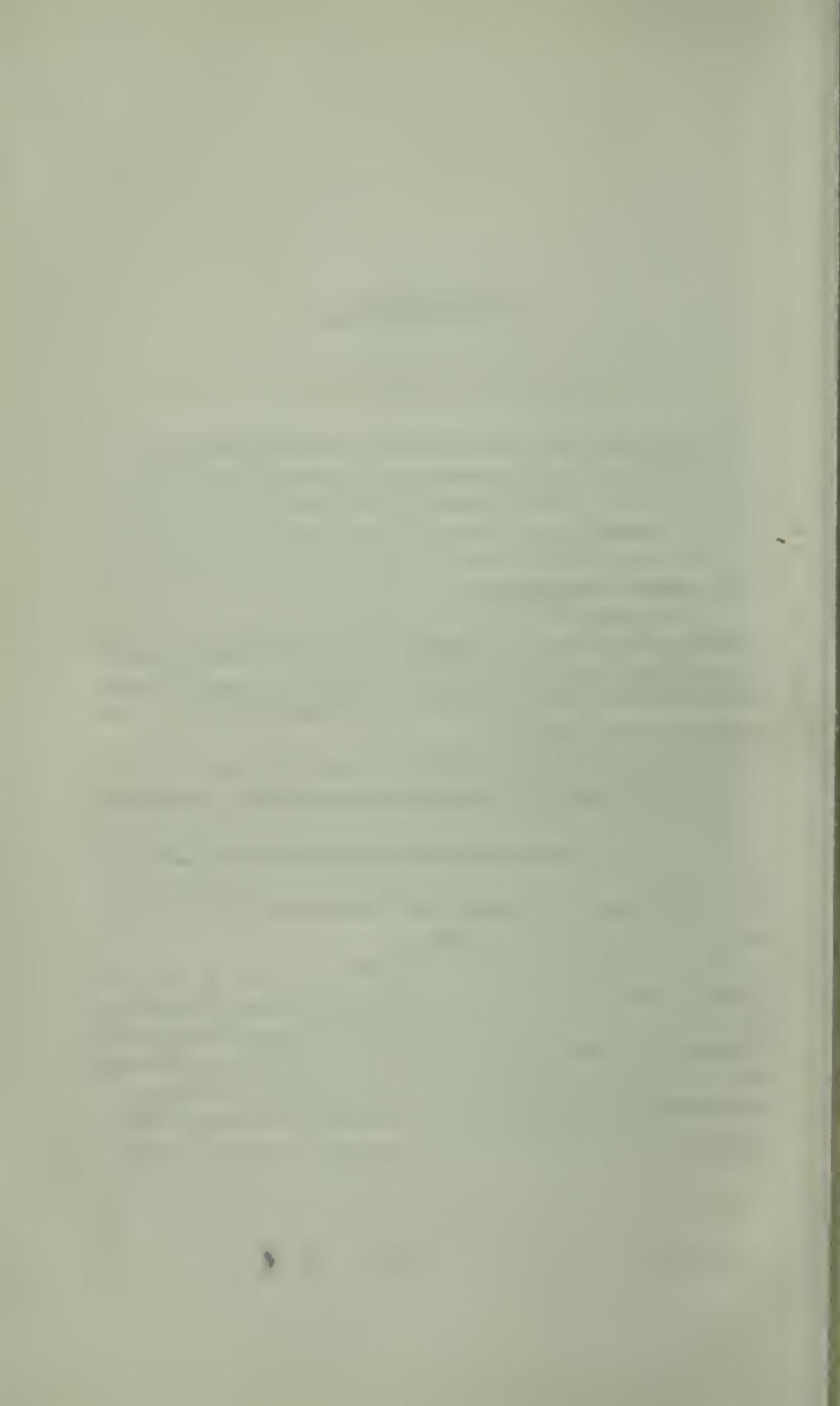
Inscription.

I HAVE arranged these few Hints for the young Student, more especially for the use of the beloved members of my household circle, and to them I would affectionately inscribe them. They represent a class (increasingly large, I trust) of earnest-minded young persons, who are anxiously seeking every aid to assist them in their religious, moral, and intellectual progress.

I have been, and still am a seeker, like themselves; and recognising in my dear young friends this common sympathy between us, I offer a few gatherings from past hours of delightful study, happy if but to some earnest seeker I bring one thought which may arouse or strengthen the dawning of intellectual life.

It forms no part of my present plan to enter into arguments with the thoughtless and gay, upon the importance of my subject. My space is too limited to allow me to do so: but to you, my beloved companions in study, I turn with sincerest pleasure, assured of your deep attention, while together we seek to inquire into the proper spirit with which we should enter upon a new period of time, and the means by which we shall best fulfil the end of our existence.

May the Holy Spirit of Wisdom and Truth rest upon us while so engaged! then shall we realize the fulfilment of the promise made to the earnest seeker, " If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs ii. 3—6.)



PREFACE.

A DEEP feeling of the importance of true earnestness of character has led me to compile this little book. Associated, as this subject must ever be, with the best interests of the young, it has for some time presented itself to me as possessing peculiar claims to attention. Various circumstances have contributed to impress its value upon my mind; but it was not until a small work, by the REV. JAMES HAMILTON, called "Life in Earnest," came into my hands, that a definite idea was brought before me. The present little volume owes its origin to my perusal of the one above mentioned, for

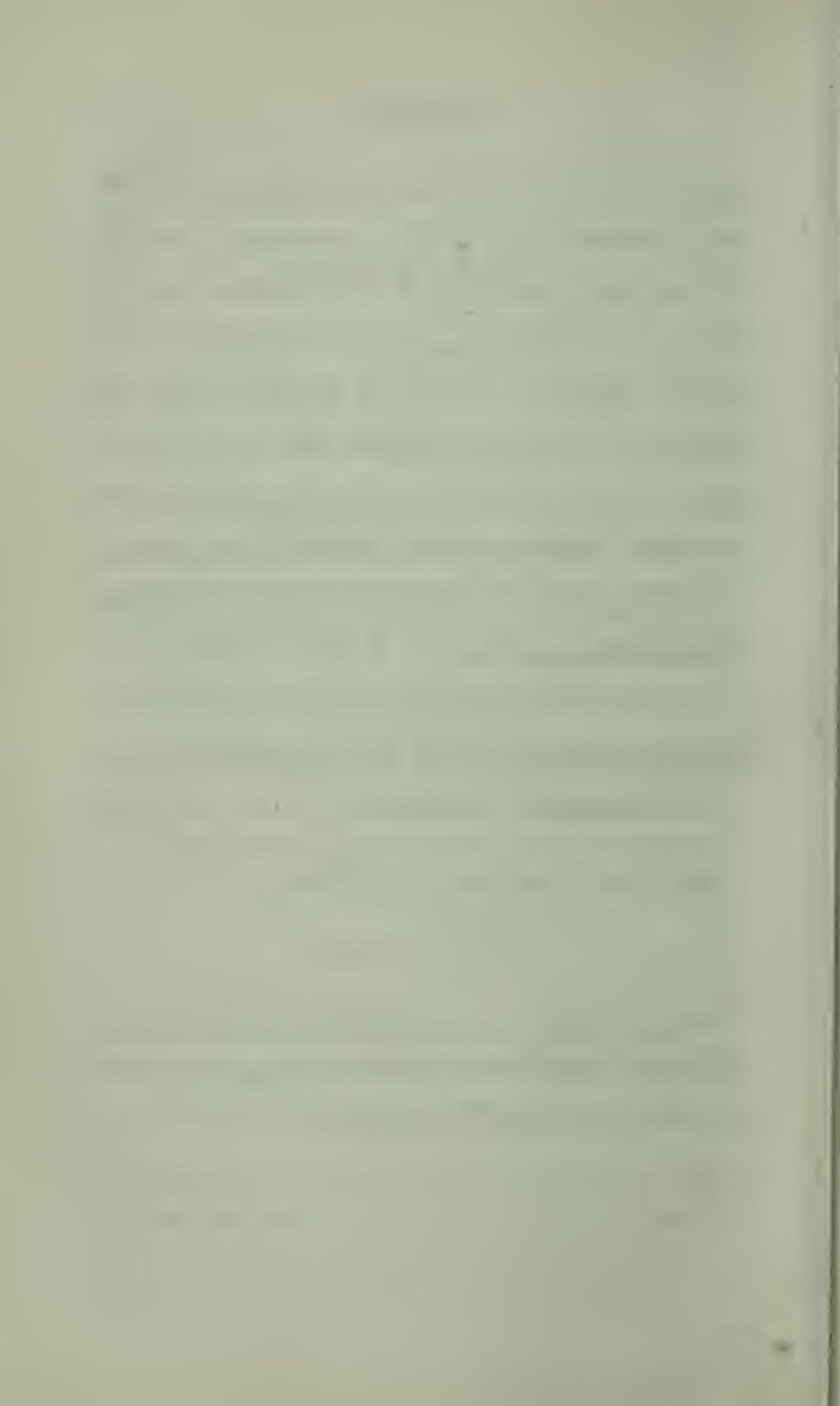
since that time I have found that all my own studies insensibly bore relation to that subject. The lives of good and great men became more interesting to me, as I saw the happy illustrations often afforded of the working of the high and holy principle accompanying Christian Earnestness ; and knowing the efficacy of example, I became anxious to place the more striking of these before others, who might not possess the same opportunities as myself for procuring the biographical works from which I drew them.

My little book is more especially intended for those who, in the common acceptation of the word, have completed their education, and are now to be considered as depending rather on self-culture than the assistance of others for their future mental progression. To such young persons some of the plans I mention may prove useful. For many of them, I am indebted to the

beloved parents, in whose happy system of home education they found a place ; and it is therefore from my own experience that I can speak of the pleasure thus imparted to study. As my object has been usefulness, and not originality, I have not scrupled to make use of all the resources which an excellent library placed within my reach, and may take as my motto the words of the French moralist—"I have here made a collection of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own, but the string that unites them together." *

NEW COURT HOUSE, CHARLTON KINGS,
CHELTENHAM.

* I am anxious to acknowledge the great kindness of the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, in contributing an original prayer to this work.



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HINTS

FOR

THE EARNEST STUDENT.

CHAPTER I.

A REVIEW OF THE PAST PERIOD OF LIFE—FEELINGS WITH WHICH WE SHOULD ENTER UPON THE NEW YEAR—PRINCIPLE OF ACTION—LOVE TO THE SAVIOUR—EVERY EMPLOYMENT TO BE CARRIED ON IN THE FEAR OF GOD, AND MADE SUBSERVIENT TO HIS GLORY.

"A MAN'S life is a tower, with a staircase of many steps,
That, as he toileth upward, crumble successively behind
him ;
No going back ; the past is an abyss ; no stopping, for the
present perisheth ;
But ever hastening on, precarious on the foothold of to-day.
Our cares are all to-day ; our joys are all to-day ;
And in one little word, our life, what is it, but to-day ? "

—*Proverbial Philosophy.*

"May 22d.—I am now within a few weeks of completing my forty-seventh year. Am I not old enough to view life as it is, and to contemplate steadily its end—what it is coming to, and must come to—what all things are without God? I know that my senses are on the very eve of becoming weaker, and that my faculties will then soon decline too; whether rapidly or not I know not, but they will decline. Is there not one faculty which never declines, which is the seed and the seal of immortality? and what has become of that faculty in me? What is it to live unto God? May God open my eyes to see Him by faith, in and through his Son Jesus Christ! May He draw me to Him, and keep me with Him, making his will my will, his love my love, his strength my strength! and may He make me feel that pretended strength, not derived from Him, is no strength, but the worst weakness! May his strength be perfected in my weakness!"—*Extract from Dr. Arnold's Diary, written a few days before his sudden death.*

CHAPTER I.

"MAY we consider each night as the tomb of the departed day, and seriously bending over it, read the inscription written by conscience of its character and exit."* Such were the words of a most able writer and earnest Christian character, while he contemplated the flight of time, and the importance of self-examination with reference to its right employment. If it be essential in relation to the smaller portions of life, how much more so when one of the greater divisions has drawn to its close ! Passed for ever from our possession, it can never be recalled. We stand upon the confines of a new period of time, and before entering upon its responsibilities, let us seek together, my dear young friends, to review the past, and gather from the record it bears, some important lessons for guidance in our onward course through life. "The world passeth away and the fashion thereof :" soon our part in the grand drama of existence will be

* Rev. John Foster.

completed, and we shall have vanished from the busy scenes of life—"The place that knows us now, shall know us no more." The subject is one demanding our most earnest attention, since every action we *now* perform bears relation to eternity, and will either contribute to our happiness or misery in the future state. It has been well said, "We perhaps forget our actions, but we shall meet them again;—we shall meet them all before the throne of God. There, in the full light of his countenance, shall they all start into new existence, and either claim, through the covenant of mercy in Christ, the condescending and free rewards of grace, or demand the proper punishment of sin—utter and endless woe."* If this be truth—and we know it to be so from the Word of the living God—surely it becomes us to see to it that we apply life to those purposes for which it has been bestowed; that we faithfully redeem it, seeking so to live that at the close of our probation on earth, we may, with the apostle, be able to say in the full assurance of faith, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

In looking back on the past years of life, the rapidity with which they have fled at once arrests our attention:—

* Rev. R. Watson.

" Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age.
Behold him when passed by : what then is seen,
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds ?
And all mankind in contradiction strong,
Rueful, aghast ! cry out on his career."

The most thoughtless are struck with awe, and may even pause for a moment in their giddy course, till serious thought is again drowned in the vortex of dissipation.

An eloquent divine thus pourtrays the rapid progress of life, and the inevitable certainty of death.* " Human life may be compared to a road,

* " La vie humaine est semblable à un chemin, dont l'issue est un précipice affreux ; on nous en avertit dès le premier pas, mais la loi est prononcée, il faut avancer toujours. Je voudrais retourner sur mes pas ; marche, marche. Un poids invincible, une force invincible nous entraîne ; il faut sans cesse avancer vers le précipice. Mille traverses, mille peines nous fatiguent et nous inquiètent dans la route ; encore si je pouvais éviter ce précipice affreux. Non, non, il faut marcher, il faut courir : telle est la rapidité des années. On se console pourtant, parceque de temps en temps on rencontre des objets qui nous divertissent, des eaux courantes, des fleurs qui passent. On voudrait arrêter ; marche, marche. Et cependant on voit tomber derrière soi tout ce qu'on avait passé ; fracas effroyable, inévitable ruine ! On se console parce qu'on emporte quelques fleurs cueillies en passant, qu'on voit se faner entre ses mains du matin au soir, quelques fruits qu'on perd en les goûtant.

" Enchantement ! toujours entraîné, tu approches du

ending in a frightful precipice; I am warned of this at the first step, but the law is pronounced; I must advance. I would retrace my steps, but on, still on; a resistless weight, a mighty power drags me forward; I must constantly advance towards the precipice. A thousand disappointments, a thousand troubles fatigue and harass me on my way; yet if I could but avoid this frightful gulf! No, no, I must walk, I must run, so rapidly do the years pass. I console myself, perhaps, because from time to time I see objects which divert me —flowing waters, perishing flowers. I wish to stop. On! still on! And during this time, I see falling behind me all that I have passed; frightful destruction, inevitable ruin. I amuse myself by gathering as I pass, flowers which fade from morning till night in my hands, fruits which wither even as I eat them.

“Enchantment! still dragged forward, I approach

gouffre. Déjà tout commence à s’effacer; les jardins moins fleuris, les fleurs moins brillantes, leurs couleurs moins vives; les prairies moins riantes, les eaux moins claires, tout se ternit, tout s’efface; l’ombre de la mort se présente; on commence à sentir l’approche du gouffre fatal. Mais il faut aller sur le bord, encore un pas. Déjà l’horreur trouble les sens, la tête tourne, les yeux s’égarent, il faut marcher. On voudrait retourner en arrière, plus de moyen; tout est tombé; tout est évanoui, tout est échappé.”—*Bossuet*.

the precipice. Already everything becomes indistinct, the gardens less lovely, the flowers less bright, their colours less lively, the meadows less gay, the waters less clear—all is ended, all is effaced! the shadows of death present themselves, the approach to the fatal gulf is felt. But it is necessary to advance yet a step further. Now a horror confuses the senses, the head becomes giddy, the eyes wander! Still on! I would return; impossible; all is faded, vanished, gone."

We may rejoice that to us the irrevocable sentence has not yet gone forth, but that time is still ours. Let us seek, then, before it has passed for ever from our grasp, to realize, by God's blessing, the great objects of this probationary existence—present usefulness and assurance of eternal glory. Our death-bed will then not be the scene of bitter remorse or fruitless regret.

And let us not enter upon another year without recalling the goodness which has crowned the past. Oh! how much occasion for praise will you here find, if you faithfully number up the mercies you have received! Think of the many spiritual blessings bestowed upon you;—the opportunities for public worship and private devotion;—intellectual and moral improvement;—the intercourse with Christian friends you have enjoyed;—the family

mercies, national benefits, the love of those dear to you, with which you have been favoured. Surely your heart will swell with gratitude when you sum up all the blessings by which you have been surrounded, and you will cry with the Psalmist—“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?”

While you thus dwell upon the many mercies bestowed upon you, it becomes a subject of anxious inquiry, whether you have made a proper use of them. If we look around us into the busy world, we see, at certain periods of the year, each man of business, from the wealthy merchant to the humble artisan, anxiously examining the state of his affairs, to ascertain what are his gains or losses. Our blessed Saviour, when on earth, pronounced this judgment upon the men of the world: “The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.” And can it be that man, with an immortal spirit, destined to live for ever in eternal blessedness or endless woe, is satisfied without the assurance of his future safety? We know that such is too often the case; and that, engrossed by the pleasures, cares, or anxieties of life, many go on from day to day without a serious thought of the state of their hearts with relation to the great end of their existence.

The Christian poet has wisely counselled us—

“ Sum up at night what thou hast done by day,
And in the morning what thou hast to do.
Dress and undress thy soul: mark the decay
And growth of it: if with thy watch, that too
Be down, then wind both up; since we shall be
More surely judged, make thy accounts agree.
In brief, acquit thee bravely: play the man;
Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.
Defer not the least virtue. Life’s poor span
Make not an ell by trifling in thy woe.
If thou do ill, the joy fades, not the pains—
If well, the pain doth fade, the joy remains.”

Let me, then, urge you to make the present period one of diligent self-examination. Retire into your chamber, and in its quiet solitude retrace the actions of the past year. Seek to discover the motives which have influenced you, the principle which has guided you, and do not rest satisfied till your conscience tells you that a true and faithful answer has been given. Ask yourself such questions as these: “Did this new year find me further advanced on the road to heaven than the last? What victories have I gained, with the help of my God, over the sin that does so easily beset me? How have I cultivated the talents intrusted to me?” These periods of retrospection and self-examination may, if properly employed, prove a most valuable assistance to us in our Christian

course; and while we deeply mourn over our derelictions from duty, we shall be enabled to form a correct estimate of our spiritual state.

Having thrown a retrospective glance on the past, let us seek to know the causes which have operated against our progress in the Christian life.

Two present themselves to me as among the principal of these, and I entreat your deep and serious attention while we dwell upon them.

The first is,—*neglect of earnest prayer for the enlightening influences of God's Holy Spirit.* I doubt not but that all who read this little book are accustomed to the daily duty of prayer; but there is so much danger of mistake, and so many rest satisfied without realizing the blessedness of communion with God, that I feel urged to say a few words on this truly important subject. Returning to the subject of self-examination, I would affectionately inquire of you, if, during the progress of the past year, you have asked God's blessing upon your studies, your undertakings, and all the concerns of your life? Have you, each morning, before commencing the business of the day, sought to realize the presence of God and the truth of his promises, to give you wisdom and all you need? Have you lifted up your heart to God, "seeking daily and hourly converse with Him who is the

Father of lights, who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all?"* And have you, in the same spirit as the sweet singer of Israel, cried, "Shew me thy way, O Lord ; teach me thy paths ; lead me in thy truth ; and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God : thy Spirit is good ; lead me into the land of uprightness."

It is when seeking in this earnest manner that we may expect to receive the help we need, and thus is it bestowed upon us : "The Father, through the mediation of Christ, communicates by the Spirit this Divine teaching to his children : the Holy Ghost is the main agent. The Divine Spirit enables us to know the things that are freely given us of God. The Lord promises 'the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things.' (John xiv. 26.)

"He dispels prejudices ; He preserves from dangerous error ; He guides into all necessary truth ; He makes our study itself devotional, humble, and practical. He removes the averseness of the affections, and He tunes the will to God. He especially reveals to the inner man the grace and glory of the Saviour. 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give

* Bickersteth.

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' (2 Cor. iv. 6.)"*

The second cause to which I would allude is,—*neglecting to take the Bible for your daily rule of life.* As children of Christian parents you have all been brought up to reverence the Word of God; you are accustomed to read it daily, and you are well acquainted with its inspired pages. But it is something even more than this that I desire for you. One who, in Holy Writ, is called "the man after God's own heart," thus describes *his* use of the blessed Word of Truth: "Thy word have I hid in my heart; that I might not sin against thee."

It has been well said by Bishop Jewell, that "The Scriptures are manna given to us from heaven, to feed us in the desert of this world." And it is certain that if we do not thus receive it into our hearts through faith, we may study its contents constantly, and yet be not true Bible Christians.

All our knowledge respecting revelation flows from the Bible. Nowhere else can we find any clue to guide us to the future destiny of man. "We must go then to the Word of God with these convictions on our mind. This is the master from whom I, who know nothing, am most implicitly to receive all things. My teacher is infallible, and I

* Bickersteth.

am not to cavil at his instructions, however in some things they may transcend my ability to comprehend them."

It falls not within my plan here to speak of the evidence by which this precious volume is proved to be the word of the ever-living God. The proofs of Divine origin are deeply interesting and conclusive ; and since they are so, it becomes us to submit implicitly to its authority, taking it as our guide and rule of life. We are told, that so plain is the way it points out to us, that "a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

A Christian poet truly described its transcendent value when he wrote :—

" Lamp of our feet ! whereby we trace
Our path when wont to stray ;
Stream from the fount of heavenly grace !
Brook by the traveller's way !

Bread of our souls, whcreon we feed,
True manna from on high !

Our guide and chart, wherein we read
Of realms beyond the sky !

Pillar of fire, through watches dark ;
Or radiant cloud by day !

When waves would whelm our tossing bark,
Our anchor and our stay !

Pole-star on life's tempestuous deep,
Beacon when doubts surround !

Compass, by which our course we keep,
Our deep sea-lead to sound !

Riches in poverty! Our aid
In every needful hour,
Unshaken rock! The pilgrim's shade,
The soldier's fortress tower!

Our shield and buckler in the fight!
Victory's triumphant palm!
Comfort in grief, in weakness might,
In sickness, Gilead's balm!

Childhood's preceptor! manhood's trust!
Old age's firm ally!
Our hope, when we go down to dust,
Of immortality!

Word of the everlasting God!
Will of his glorious Son!
Without thee how could earth be trod,
Or heaven itself be won?"

Tremble, then, lest you should neglect this mine of heavenly treasure ; seek to have its life-giving truths deeply impressed upon your hearts. Prostrate your reason before the word of Revelation, and with the docility of little children seek to be led into the way of truth.

Call your Bible your beloved guide ; make it so, and you will soon find you have a never-failing counsellor by your side, however trying and difficult the circumstances may be in which you are placed.

You are young and inexperienced ; you need wisdom to direct you, as you pass onward through life. Hear, and take to your hearts, the promises

given to those who seek daily to gather this heavenly manna.

“ Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” (Isaiah lv. 2, 3.)

“ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” (Joshua i. 8.)

“ His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season ; his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (Psalm i. 2, 3.)

“ The law of God is in his heart ; none of his steps shall slide.” (Psalm xxxvii. 31.)

“ Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” (Psalm cxix. 9.) *

Rest not until you feel that you realize the

* The late M‘Cheyne was a bright example of the hallowing influences of study thus pursued. “ No sooner was he settled in his chamber, than he commenced his work. With

blessedness of those who are led by the Spirit of truth ; your Bible will then no longer be a sealed book to you, but when you go to its sacred pages for counsel and direction, a holy light will shine upon its precepts, bringing them home to your conscience.

While urging you to begin an earnest Christian life, I should indeed be making an important omission were I not to seek to bring before you the great principle of action which is to be interwoven with all you do and say. Let us turn to our never-failing guide, the book of Divine wisdom ; and we

him the commencement of all labour invariably consisted in the preparation of his own soul. The forerunner of each day's visitations was a calm season of private devotion, during morning hours. The walls of his chamber were witnesses of his prayerfulness—I believe of his tears as well as of his cries. The pleasant sound of psalms often issued from his room at an early hour. Then followed the reading of the Word for his own sanctification, and few have so fully realized the blessing of the first Psalm—His leaf did not wither, for his roots were in the waters. It was here, too, that he began to study so closely the works of Jonathan Edwards ; reckoning them a mine to be wrought, and if wrought sure to repay the toil. Along with this author, the ‘Letters of Samuel Rutherford’ were often in his hand. Books of general knowledge he occasionally perused, but it was done with the steady purpose of finding in them some illustration of spiritual truth. He rose from reading ‘Insect Architecture’ with the observation—‘God reigns in a community of ants and ichneumons as visibly as among living men or mighty seraphim.’”—*Life of Rev. R. M'Cheyne.*

shall find it set forth in the glowing language of the apostle : “ And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Cor. vi. 20.)

Earnestly do I pray that each of you, my beloved readers, may understand the full meaning of this beautiful passage of Scripture, for it can only be those who have tasted of the love of Jesus who can thus glorify God. I have spoken of communion with God, but until you have sought to know Him, who is the way, the truth, the life, you cannot enjoy this happiness.

It has been well said,—“ The Gospel does not abolish labour ; it gives it a new and a nobler aspect. The Gospel abolishes labour much in the same way as it abolishes death ; it leaves the thing, but changes its nature. The Gospel sweetens the believer’s work, it gives him new motives for performing it. The Gospel dignifies toil, it transforms it from the drudgery of the workhouse or the penitentiary to the affectionate offices and joyful services of the fireside and the family circle. It asks us to do for the sake of Christ many things which we were once compelled to bear as a portion of the curse, and which worldly men perform for selfish and secondary reasons.”*

* Hamilton.

When this principle becomes interwoven with the life of the believer, when his eye is fixed on his Saviour, and his heart filled with his love, then it is that the earnest disciple seeks to know how he can glorify his God, his reconciled Father in Christ. His heart swells with ardent love, and he brings to the foot of the cross, time, influence, wealth, talent—all that he possesses—and consecrates it to the service of his Heavenly Father. Hear the dying testimony of one of God's most honoured servants, the late Mrs. Fry. In the prospect of death, she could say, when reviewing her past life—"Since my heart was touched at seventeen years old, I believe I never have awakened from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or by night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve the Lord."

This life-giving principle was never more richly displayed than in the ministerial labours of the Rev. G. Whitfield ; and we find the latter traced to their true origin, in his funeral sermon, preached by a beloved brother labourer :—"If it be inquired, what was the foundation of his integrity, of his sincerity, courage, patience, and every other valuable and amiable quality, it is easy to give the answer. It was not the excellence of his natural temper ; not the strength of his understanding ; it was not the force of education, no, nor the advice

of his friends. It was no other than faith in a bleeding Lord. Faith of the operation of God ; it was a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away ; it was the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which was given unto him, filling his soul with disinterested love to every child of man. From this arose the torrent of eloquence which frequently bore down all before it ; from this that astonishing force of persuasion, which the most hardened sinners could not resist ; this it was which often made his head as waters, and his eyes as fountains of tears ; this it was which enabled him to pour out his soul in prayer in a manner peculiar to himself."

Here, then, is the secret of all you see estimable in the character of the earnest Christian. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; whether we live then or die, we are the Lord's." It was this spirit of fervent love to the Saviour which led a Schwartz and a Martyn into distant lands to publish the tidings of salvation. It was seen in the unremitting efforts of a Wilberforce and a Buxton to relieve the captive slave—in the labours of Simeon—and shone with equal lustre in

one of our own sex,* when, with a heart burning with love to Christ, she devoted all her powers to the good of her fellow-creatures. Say not that you have neither influence nor the talent necessary so to serve the cause of Christ. The question is not as to the amount of talent, but the nature of its employment; and however small the portion intrusted to you may be, if, animated by love to your Saviour, you seek to devote it to his service, you will be owned and approved by your Heavenly Father.

Entering thus upon the New Year, you will look forward to its duties and employments with cheerful alacrity; you will feel that having Christ, you have all things, and that whatever may be the painful afflictions and trials of the future, they will be all overruled by the tender care of your reconciled Father in Christ; your earthly cares will be sensibly lightened; and you will understand the spirit with which a devoted servant of God cried, "O Lord, let me have anything but thy frown, and anything with thy smile."

When the heart is touched with the love of God, every employment is made subservient to the one great end of life, viz., his glory. You will at once

* Mrs. Fry.

feel that you have an aim in all your studies and employments.

Thus devoting your powers to the service of God, you will enjoy true happiness, for there will no longer be “a disparity between the lofty capacity of the human soul and the objects upon which it is occupied.”

You will regard the acquisition of knowledge as not an end, but a means ; and while you anxiously seek for every opportunity of improvement within your power, you will make all subordinate to the great aim of your life. An old author observes,— “Life has its enjoyments, and is not the contemptible thing we make it; but heaven upon earth, when it is conducted upon right principles, directed to a right end, and devoted to the will of God. What would we have more, when the way to heaven is through heaven, if quiet passions, regular desires, contented minds, pure wills, well-governed hopes, holy longings, happy foretastes, communion with God, reconciliation to death, can make it so? Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, by adverting continually to his presence with reverence and godly fear, considering Him as always looking upon the heart ; trusting in his Almighty protection, believing in Him as a holy, sin-hating God, and reconciled to sinners of mankind, only in Jesus Christ ; valuing his favour

above all the world, and making it the settled, sole aim of our lives, to approve ourselves in his pure eyes.”*

It is delightful to retrace the lives of those who have been enabled thus to glorify God, and we could bring forward many instances of high talent devoted to his service.

Newton thus applied the intellectual strength so liberally bestowed upon him, and by “uniting philosophy with religion, he dissolved the league which genius had formed with scepticism, and added to the cloud of witnesses the brightest name of ancient or modern times.”†

Whilst revered as the greatest philosopher of his time, he never failed to use the influence this elevated position gave him, to advance the cause of religion; and if Dr. Halley, his friend and companion, ever dared to utter anything disrespectful to it, he invariably checked him, and said, “I have studied these things—you have not.”

Once having this end placed before you, and referring all things to it, it will become as the pole-star to the mariner, leading you to your home, through all the difficulties and trials of life; your employments and recreations will all be made subservient to your one great desire; and as you will have a standard of judgment to which to bring

* Adams’s Private Thoughts.

† Paley.

every pursuit and occupation, you will not be tormented by the wavering and undecided feelings which must ever be the lot of those who do not act according to the same standard. You will suddenly find intricate paths made plain before you ; amid the darkness which may overshadow your course, you will have, as it were, a silken clue ever in your hand to guide you right ; you will hear a voice saying, " This is the way, walk ye in it." You will no longer be at a loss how to act in difficult circumstances, for you will know where to go for wisdom and strength, and you have God's holy Word as your rule of life and conduct. Your anxiety will not be, " What will the world think or say if I act thus ?" but " What is the will of my Heavenly Father ?" Difficulties will vanish, and you will realize the truth of the promise, " I will instruct thee and lead thee in the way thou shalt go."

The late Charlotte Elizabeth was a bright example of the consistency with which Christians will be enabled to act, if their eye be single. " When wholly dependent on her pen for the supply of her daily wants, two separate proposals were made to her—one to the effect that she should become an anonymous contributor to a highly popular magazine, supplying tales or other light

articles ; the purport of which was to be as moral as she pleased, but there was to be no direct mention of religion ; the terms offered were extremely liberal, and strict secrecy being observed, the writer, it was urged, would escape the charge of inconsistency ; the proposal was moreover made when her regular source of income was suddenly closed, and when the idea of becoming burdensome to her generous brother was scarcely supportable. It was a temptation ! Charlotte Elizabeth, however, resisted it. She regarded herself as engaged to work in the Lord's vineyard, and although the conflict was severe, she declined, as she herself has recorded, to hire herself out *to another master*.

"The other proposal involved a refusal even more painful. She was asked by an old and very kind friend to recast for him a novel which he had written several years before, and which had been unsuccessful. Her share in the work was never to be known, and *carte blanche* as to terms was laid before her. She at once, though, as she relates, with many bitter tears, wrote a faithful letter to the friend in question, setting forth, most unequivocally, the ground of her refusal, adding, moreover, a plain statement of those great Christian doctrines with which, as she had reason to believe, her friend was still unacquainted. Of that friend, who, as it

was supposed, had intended to make her the heiress of a considerable portion of his wealth, she never heard further tidings. Her sole reward was the testimony of her conscience.”*

I must not dwell longer upon this deeply interesting subject, as I shall have occasion constantly to refer to it in the following pages. That you may each be brought thus to consecrate all your powers to the service of your God and Saviour, is my earnest prayer; then will every employment, however lowly in the eyes of the world, be ennobled, and you will enter into the spirit of the quaint but excellent poet Herbert, when he sings:—

“ Teach me, my God and King!

 In all things thee to see,

 And what I do in anything,

 To do it as for thee.

A man that looks on glass,

 On it may stay his eye:

Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass,

 And then the heaven espy.

All may of thee partake,

 Nothing can be so mean,

Which with this tincture, *For thy sake*,

 Will not grow bright and clean.

* Closing Scenes.

A servant with this clause,
 Makes drudgery divine ;
Who sweeps a room as for thy cause,
 Makes that and the action fine.

This is the famous stone
 That turneth all to gold ;
For that which God doth touch and own,
 Cannot for less be told."

CHAPTER II.

AN END IN LIFE—EACH PERSON A MISSION TO FULFIL, A CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE, TALENTS TO IMPROVE—IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CULTURE AND MENTAL PROGRESSION—AN EARNEST LIFE THE ONLY HAPPY ONE.

“TELL me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
'Dust thou art, to dust returnest,'
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way,
But to act that each to-morrow
Find us further than to-day.

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead past bury its dead!
Act, act in the living present!
Heart within and God o'erhead.

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.”

Longfellow.

CHAPTER II.

THROUGHOUT the vast region of nature, one universal law prevails. The great Creator acts not in his visible universe without design. The lofty mountain, from whose icy summit springs of living water gush forth, destined to fructify and refresh distant countries, the flower which grows in humble beauty by the wayside, with the insect which sports or lives out its short span of existence upon its leaf, the meanest pebble in our path, are all created for some purpose in the economy of nature ; and their place and end of being are determined by the Maker of all things. Man, the noblest of God's visible creation, is not exempt from this law ; but to him is, by the aid of Revelation, reserved the proud consciousness of the object of his existence. Endowed with powers which render him capable of the highest intellectual enjoyment, the questions, What am I ? and why am I thus created ? must often arise in the human breast : and they become to us most deeply important, when we gather from the records of past lives how many have lived in

vain ! We find them ever present with the thoughtful inquirer, and even many who have (it is to be feared) been unsuccessful in their search, have dwelt with painful anxiety upon this subject. "It was ever my object," writes Lady Stanhope, "to search out why I came into the world, what I ought to do in it, and where I shall go."

We turn to the lives of statesmen, philosophers, and those who have attained the highest pinnacle of worldly greatness, and what is the testimony we receive from them at the close of their career of apparent prosperity ? They all witness to the insufficiency of earthly objects to give them true happiness. They speak of the void experienced, even when they had attained the summit of their wishes.

We hear one in the full tide of worldly prosperity asserting, "that in every life without exception there is a frightful void."*

We are happily not left to grope our way in darkness : the earnest spirit, seeking to know the end of its existence, finds in the revelation which God has made to his creature man, an answer to this great question,— "*The end of all things is the glory of God.*" This sentence, short as it is, includes a solution of every difficulty.

When assured of this great truth, the next point

* Madame de Maintenon.

is to ascertain whether we are really fulfilling our own particular mission. You are each ready, perhaps, to say, "To me, so young, ignorant, and inexperienced, can any work be given? Have I an allotted part to perform on earth?" I answer, Undoubtedly you have. In the order of Providence, our position and work may be various, but God has assigned to each human being their respective duties. This appointment is made to each of you; and if you seek to know wherein it lies, you will assuredly find it.

If you would not, at the close of life, look back with sorrow upon the past, your anxious desire will now be to discover what it is that Divine Providence has marked out for you.

The words of our great Exemplar will assist us in our search. "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day. My meat is to do the will of my Father and to finish his work." And again, "I must be about my Father's business." If with an earnest and single eye you thoughtfully survey your position and your circumstances, soon will the way be made plain before you. It may not be in an elevated sphere of worldly pomp and grandeur. It may be that your name is never to be heard beyond the home circle; but within that sweet sanctuary of household love, you may be

acting a part as elevated as the greatest hero, whose name has been heralded by fame throughout the world.

It matters not whether your present mission be to study or to teach, to think, direct, govern, or submit; sure I am, that it will be made manifest to you, if you thus seek to know it.*

You will be perchance also greatly mistaken, if

* The following extract from a letter of Sir Fowell Buxton to his wife shows how earnestly he sought to know wherein his true mission lay, and his after-life exhibited the fulfilment of the promise to the diligent seeker :—

"After I had written to you yesterday, I went with Peter Bedford and Charles on a visit to Newgate. I saw four poor creatures who are to be executed on Tuesday next. Poor things! God have mercy on them! The sight of them was sufficient for that day. I felt no further inclination to examine the prison. It has made me long much that my life may not pass quite uselessly, but that in some shape or other I may assist in checking and diminishing crime and its consequent misery. Surely it is in the power of all to do something in the service of their Master; and surely I among the rest, if I were now to begin and endeavour, to the best of my capacity, to serve Him, might be the means of good to some of my fellow-creatures. This capacity, is, I feel, no mean talent, and attended with no inconsiderable responsibility. I must pray that I may at length stir myself up, and be enabled to feel somewhat of the real spirit of a missionary, and that I may devote myself, my influence, my time, and above all, my affections, to the honour of God and the happiness of man. My mission is evidently not abroad, but it is

you look away from present duty with the idea that far away lies your mission. A German proverb says, "Do the duty which lies nearest to thee ;" and it is in responding to these home claims that your calling undoubtedly lies. Your first duty is to God, and if you fulfil that aright, all relative obligations will be sure of proper attention.

It is my anxious desire to assist you in forming a proper estimate of your position and its responsibilities ; and to obtain this it will be desirable that we should survey the means possessed by you, avail-

not less a mission on that account. I feel that I may journey through life by two very different paths, and that the time is now come for choosing which I will pursue. I may go on as I have been going on, not absolutely forgetful of futurity, nor absolutely devoted to it. I may get riches and repute, and gratify my ambition, and do some good and more evil ; and, at length, I shall find all my time on earth expended, and in retracing my life I shall see little but occasions lost and capacities misapplied. The other is a path of more labour and less indulgence. I may become a real soldier of Christ ; I may feel that I have no business on earth but to do his will and to walk in his ways, and I may direct every energy I have to the service of others. Of these paths, I know which I would most gladly choose ; 'but what I would, that I do not ; but what I hate, that do I.' In short, the cares, and the pleasures, and the business of this world choke the good seed, and we are perpetually deceived. We would sow to the Spirit, and we sow to the flesh ; we desire heaven, and we are chained to earth."

able in aid of the particular work to which you may be called.

The subject of influence* is one to which, perhaps, you have given but little attention ; yet it has nevertheless a weighty bearing upon your social position, and in the present day the wide extent of knowledge renders it so liable to abuse, that it is necessary each member of society should see to it that the influence they employ be of a beneficial character.

Without being aware of it, your influence is at this very moment acting in all directions : your conduct as a child, relative, or friend, has

* "Influence, whether derived from money, talents, or connexions, is power. There is no person so insignificant but he has much of this power. The little Israelite maid, in Naaman's family, is an instance ; some, indeed, suppose that they have more power than they really have ; but we generally think we possess less than we really have. Whoever neglects or misapplies this power is an unprofitable servant ; unbelief, timidity, and delicacy often cramp its exertion ; but it is our duty to call ourselves out to the exertion of this power, as Mordecai called out Esther ; it is our duty to watch against everything that might pervert our influence ; for mere regard to reputation will often carry many into error. Who would not follow Aaron in worshipping the golden calf ? Even men of feeble public talents may acquire much influence by kindness and consistency of character. Ministers are defective in resting their personal influence too much on their public ministry ; time will give weight to a man's character."—*Cecil*.

the force of example to all around you. "Say not, then, I can do nothing. What is it in you that says so? Your indolence or your modesty? You must do something, or answer for it at the bar of God. You have done nothing. Be it that you have only one talent, or a fraction of a talent; that fraction or that unit must be employed, or you must bear the character, and meet the doom of the slothful servant."* It is well observed, "Two persons never meet, however short the duration or whatever the cause of the interview, without exerting some influence upon each other." Some of the most eminent servants of God have traced the turning-point in their character to the stimulus they have received from intercourse with some earnest-minded, youthful friend.

Sir Fowell Buxton delighted to look back upon his early acquaintance with the Gurney family, and traced to it one great source of his after usefulness. He thus speaks of it:—"I know no blessing of a temporal nature (and it is not only temporal) for which I ought to render so many thanks as my connexion with the Earlham family. It has given a colour to my life. Its influence was most positive and pregnant with good, at that particular period between school and manhood. They were eager for improvement; I caught the infection: I was

* James.

resolved to please them ; and in the College of Dublin, at a distance from all my friends and all control, their *influence* and the desire to please them kept me hard at my books, and sweetened the toil they gave. The distinctions I gained at college (little valuable as distinctions, but valuable because habits of industry, perseverance, and reflection were necessary to obtain them), these boyish distinctions, were exclusively the result of the animating passion in my mind, to carry back to them the prizes which they prompted and enabled me to win." In another place he speaks of his intercourse with these friends making him ten times more industrious than anything else could.

Will you not, my dear young friends, seek to be of those whose influence is of such a nature as that above described ? Will you not strive to cultivate that earnest spirit in all you do, that the casual visitor may receive from you such an impulse as was given to the eminent philanthropist we have above named, by his dear companions at Earlham ? or will you go on in a course of fruitless inaction, looking not to the account you must one day render, and of the actual evil influence spread over all around you by your sinful example ?

The Rev. James Hamilton has thus admirably described the two characters :—" There are some

who have no business at all ; they are of no use in the world. They are doing no good and attempting none ; and when they are taken out of the world, their removal creates no vacancy. When an oak or any noble and useful tree is uprooted, his removal creates a blank. For years after, when you look to the place which once knew him, you see that something is missing. The branches of adjacent trees have not yet supplied the void. They still hesitate to occupy the place formerly filled by their powerful neighbour ; and there is still a deep chasm in the ground—a rugged pit, which shows how far his giant roots once spread. But when a leafless pole—a wooden pin is plucked up, it comes easy and clean away. There is no rending of the turf, no marring of the landscape, no vacuity created, no regret. It leaves no memento, and is never missed."

It will, perhaps, assist you, my dear young friends, to understand the nature of the influence to be desired by you, if we recall the examples of some of the great and good men whose lives present to us a bright picture of well-directed Christian influence.

The name of Simeon will be long remembered, and the amount of the influence for good exercised by him will never be fully known till that day when the secrets of all hearts are opened. " Privately he was always ready to advise, instruct,

assist, and console : publicly, his own earnest and attractive labours at Trinity Church, together with his well-known and eagerly consulted ‘ Horæ Homileticæ,’ stayed and strengthened many a struggling mind. His weekly party at King’s brought under his personal knowledge and immediate *influence*, the aspiring, the ill-assured, the diligent, and the well-disposed. His rooms were, in fact, a rallying-point for the timid and hesitating student, who, conscious of some besetting perplexities and difficulties, sought some master mind to guide him ; for the earnest and inquiring scholar in quest of scriptural information, and for those—a large and interesting class—who, mindful of the prayers, and counsels, and warnings of their village home, shrank from the reckless gaiety of the University, and sighed for the kindred companionship of the single-hearted and the sober-minded.”* I would also recall the excellent and devoted Wilberforce to your minds in connexion with this subject.† Surrounded as he was by a glorious company of coadjutors in his great work ; deeply interesting

* Closing Scenes.

† “To attempt any outline of the bearings of this extraordinary man’s protracted and honourable course upon the general interests of religion and the welfare of his country, is beyond the power of the present writer. He knew him, personally, only for the last twenty-four years ; but that intimacy has traced, in indelible lines, the various excellences

would the employment be, to search into the hal-lowed influence mutually exercised by the Buxtons, Clarksons, Thorntons, and others, in that chosen circle.

The name of Schwartz is also one which stands

upon his heart. He admires others—he loved Wilberforce. His influence upon his age was prodigious! Fifty-three years—and such years! at such a crisis! from 1780 to 1833—with such a revival of Christianity going on; such noble institutions formed and matured; such a front put upon real, vital, scriptural piety; such an improved state of religious feeling in all ranks, from the highest to the lowest; such a gradual elevation of the character of bishops and clergy; such an acknowledgment and avowal of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel; such a commencement of the illumination of the Heathen and Mohammedan world; such means set to work for the instruction of the young, and for the relief and recovery of every species of wretchedness! But enumeration is impossible. Nor will the writer trust to himself to say how much of all this may be traced to that great statesman, who by his writings vindicated the Gospel, by his life exemplified its precepts, and by his benevolence commended its excellency; who swayed, gradually, much of the opinion of Europe as to religion; who lived to accomplish the greatest enterprise of benevolence which it ever fell to mortal hand to undertake; who was in a position which no other senator in our age has occupied; uniting in himself the various influences of the orator, statesman, and the Christian; who has raised the character of our country by associating Christianity more than ever with the love and affections of mankind; and who, dying in a private station, and after years of retirement from public service, was compelled to occupy in his death the niche of honour amongst the great and good of Britain, which

in the lists of those who have rightly employed the influence placed in their power. His character and example have been justly exhibited as a model to Protestant missionaries of every class, more than half a century. "The Bishop," observes the biographer of a late oriental prelate, "used to say at his table at Calcutta, that he wished a copy of the Memoirs of Schwartz might be placed in the hands of every student at Bishop's College, and every missionary throughout the diocese." The peculiar nature of his example renders it eminently worthy of such a commendation. "It is not that of one whose talents or acquirements were so exalted and extensive as to dazzle and confound the beholders, and by its immense superiority and unattainable excellence to preclude all hope of successful imitation. It is, as we have already observed, that of a man of solid, but not in themselves, and separately considered, of uncommon endowments; though in their proportion, combination, and harmony, it must

neither he nor his family for an instant contemplated; and thus to exhibit the first example of a grateful country, adorning with all the sacred solemnities of a public funeral, and assembling in the persons of her most exalted characters in Church and State, around the remains of one, of whom it was only necessary to say, when interred by the national gratitude, that he was born August 14, 1759, and died July 19, 1833. Such was the simple inscription on his tomb."—*Christian Keepsake.*

be admitted, not often witnessed or possessed. Sound, however, and valuable as his intellectual powers and acquisitions were, his moral and religious qualities were those which chiefly distinguished him, which gave force and energy to his character, which conciliated the esteem and secured the confidence of all, and which have rendered his name illustrious, and his memory, as well as his labours, so inestimable a blessing to the Church and to the world. It was the triumph of principles and of conduct, purely and eminently Christian ; of singleness and simplicity of purpose.”*

I cannot refrain here also from naming one who has been lately often quoted, but whose devoted earnestness was of so auspicious a character, that I would particularly recommend his example to your notice ; I refer to the late Dr. Arnold, of Rugby. We are told that “his hold on all his pupils was perfectly astonishing, and that it was not so much an enthusiastic admiration for his genius, or learning, or eloquence which stirred within them ; it was a sympathetic thrill, caught from a spirit that was earnestly at work in the world : whose work was healthy, sustained, and constantly carried forward in the fear of God : a work that was founded on a deep sense of its duty and its value, and was coupled with such a true humility, and an un-

* Life of Schwartz.

affected simplicity, that others could not help being invigorated by the same feeling, and with the belief that they too, in their measure, could go and do likewise.”*

The future generation will, perhaps, still more have reason to appreciate the blessing of his influence than our own. The seed sown in dependance upon the Divine blessing in the hearts of so many of Arnold’s pupils will, doubtless, be seen in their earnest lives ; and many may henceforth arise up to call him blessed, who will owe their first germ of intellectual life to some of the influence (indirectly or not) exercised over them by the impulse originally given by this noble-minded man.

You will say, perhaps, Would that I could do like these great and exalted characters ! Would that I could thus exercise a decided influence for good upon those around me ! but I have not the energy of a Buxton, the varied talent of a Wilberforce, or the original power of mind of an Arnold. Granted ; but have you ever sought to ascertain the exact boundary-line of your influence ? Have you none around accessible to your affectionate persuasions ? Has your example no weight with brothers, sisters, friends, and servants ? Can you not encourage, advise, direct, and instruct those younger than yourself ? It is recorded of an elder

* Arnold’s Life.

brother of M'Cheyne, that "he spent much of his leisure hours in attending to the younger members of the family. Tender and affectionate, his grieved look, when they vexed him by resisting his counsels, had, it is said, something in it so persuasive that it never failed in the end to prevail on those with whom his words had not succeeded."*

Watch, then, for opportunities of impressing some important truth, or of strengthening the wavering principle of the younger brother, sister, or friend. It has been said in holy Scripture, "He that watereth others shall be watered himself;" and nowhere is this more seen than in the first weak efforts of a youthful mind to do good to others.

I once heard a devoted Christian and influential person ascribe his first religious impressions to being led to give assistance in a Sunday-school, and several other instances of a similar nature have come under my notice. It will be then not only for the good of others, but for your own progress, that you thus look out for objects to benefit.

There is one kind of influence, the power of which is by no means properly appreciated among the young, and I must not, therefore, pass it by without notice; it is *the influence of love*. Many of you occupy the important position of *an elder* member in your families. Have you ever considered the

* Memoirs of the Rev. R. M'Cheyne.

greatness of the responsibility which thus rests upon you, or the large share of influence which falls to your lot?—whatever it may be, if you follow the course I would suggest to you, I am assured it would be increased sevenfold. “We love Him because He first loved us,” is the word of inspiration; and you will find the same principle operates with astonishing power upon those younger than yourself. How often do we hear the remark made of a high-spirited, noble-minded boy, “He can be led, but never driven!”

Cultivate a loving, affectionate manner to *all* the members of your household circle. I believe one great secret of government is, to be able to govern yourself, and children are quick to detect if such be not the case. The raised voice, the impatient gesture, the excited countenance, are but too plain tokens of a feeling that awaits but resistance to be poured forth. Your first step, then, in the attainment of the influence of love must be to curb your own spirit; to watch every outbreak, and see to it that, to the youngest member of your circle, all are treated with the courteous and gentle bearing which belongs to your character as a follower of your meek and lowly Master. From the elder member will be derived, in a great measure, the tone of a family circle. If, therefore, you are fretful, irritable, and tyrannical, the effects of your example will be

shown in the group of young imitators around you, and discord will be the prevailing element of the family circle.

You will also find a gentle, tender rebuke ever far more effectual than a hasty word ; and if you seek thus to reprove, you will soon experience how literally true are the words of Scripture—"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

The *influence of love* is magical: it softens the most stony heart; and whatever may be the apparent effect produced by a course of gentle admonition, rest assured, my dear young friends, that an influence, which will be felt in after-years, rests upon those subjected to it. An eminent servant of God has told us that, when a youth, he often appeared not to listen to the tender remonstrances of his affectionate mother, and would hastily leave the room, as if in anger; but it was to go and weep secretly at the remembrance of her words.

The apostolical admonition, "Love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous," is one which, if carried out by the different members of a family, would materially change the character of many a social circle. It has been well said, "*Christian courtesy is a compound of truth and love.* Without love, courtesy is but a hollow mask for indifference; without truth, it only deceives and injures its

object. *Genuine* and wholesome courtesy is the fruit of God's own Spirit."

Take our blessed Saviour in this, as in all other things, as your example. Follow his steps, mark the tender accents with which He speaks to the sinner, raises the fallen, and strengthens the weak-hearted. The atmosphere of love was the one which ever surrounded the Redeemer of the lost, and it should be that in which his followers should delight to dwell. Its blessedness has been portrayed by the inspired Psalmist, and is one which I earnestly desire to see realized by you. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; and as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalm cxxxiii. 1—3.)

Perhaps it will be well if we now enumerate the talents you undoubtedly possess, as it will assist you in a clear idea of the duties devolving upon you.

Your present situation in the world is that of a steward; and we may observe that when your soul is required of you, when you are called to give an account, "you will be no longer a steward." It will then only remain to give an account of your

stewardship. Oh, my beloved young friends ! will you not then earnestly seek, that the account you render be such an one that you may hear those blessed words, " Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

But what are, then, the talents intrusted to you ? —The immortal spirit, with its powers and faculties ; viz., understanding, memory, will ; the affections, thought ; your bodies, with their organs of sense ; the gift of speech, the use of your hands, feet, and all the members of your body ; the worldly goods you enjoy. The bodily strength, health, learning, and knowledge ; advantages of education, time, influence ; these, and many others which I might enumerate, are yours ; and a day will undoubtedly come when you will stand before the Judge of the quick and the dead, to be judged for your use or abuse of them.

Endeavour often to realize that day : enter within your chamber, and in its quiet retirement ask yourselves the questions, How am I now employing these many and varied gifts or talents intrusted to me ? Are the powers of my mind devoted to the service of my God ? Do I seek to know Him and his will, as revealed to me in his word ? Do I employ the powers of my body aright ? Do I " present my members, not to sin as unrighteousness, but as instruments of righteousness ? " Do I

devote the worldly goods I possess to the service of my God? Is my time daily regulated with regard to eternity? Is the influence I possess employed constantly for good?—Thus examining yourself, you will be led to apply afresh to the Source of strength.

With regard to the talents you possess, there is one point which I am anxious deeply to impress upon your minds. It is, that you determine diligently to cultivate the gifts bestowed upon you.

The importance of self-culture is as yet not fully understood by many young persons who are anxious to act aright. Few are aware of the great resources in their power, would they but draw freely from them. Too often is it the case that when a girl leaves school she considers she bids farewell to all advantages for study, and hastily decides that she is henceforth to be without opportunities for improvement: not so with the earnest seeker. Her past studies have given her some idea of the importance of self-culture; and no sooner has she again taken up her residence in her home, than she eagerly looks around her to form a correct estimate of the capabilities of her position. All the stores of the family library are drawn upon for her great object; a plan for study is formed, and she immediately enters upon it. If she be an elder sister, the younger members of the family partake of the

pleasurable and profitable excitement ; and it is soon found that the morning's study affords subject for conversation to all the circle. By degrees the young student feels her resources increase ; her ideas expand, and she is enabled to form more enlarged plans for improvement. She experiences the fulfilment of the promise, " Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance."

To those who pursue a different course, and who sink into a careless, listless state, is a heavy punishment reserved. The contrast is well described in the following words :—" Experience teaches us that those faculties of our nature that are most cultivated become most acute. If intellectual pursuits are neglected, the intellect itself becomes weakened : in proportion as the senses are exercised, they are strengthened : in proportion as the pleasures they afford stand high or low in our estimation, we graduate towards the brute, which knows no pleasures but those of sense, or towards the angel, who knows no pleasures but what are spiritual."*

Be not discouraged, if for a time you find difficulties in your way ; rest assured they will vanish under the force of determined energy. Soon the time will come when, at each progressive step, you will look back with thankfulness and delight upon

* Kirby.

the sensible advance you have made. Make up your mind, with the help of your God, to progress ; let your motto be, “ Higher ; yet higher ! ” Take these precepts of St. Augustine to your heart : “ Be always displeased with what thou art, if thou desirest to attain to what thou art not ; for where thou hast placed thyself, there thou abidest. But if thou sayest, I have enough, thou perishest : always add, always walk, always proceed ; neither stand still, nor go back, nor deviate. He that standeth still proceedeth not ; he goeth back that continueth not ; he deviateth that revolveth ; he goeth better that creepeth in his way, than he that runneth out of his way.”

The advantage of this state of discipline is forcibly expressed by Dr. Channing in these words :—“ I have faith in labour, and I see the goodness of God in placing us in a world where labour alone can keep us alive. I would not change if I could our subjection to physical laws ; our exposure to hunger and cold, and the necessity of constant conflicts with the natural world. I would not, if I could, so temper the elements that they should infuse into us only grateful sensations ; that they should make vegetation so exuberant as to anticipate every want, and the minerals so ductile as to offer no resistance to our strength or skill. Such a world would make a contemptible race. Man owes his growth, his

energy, chiefly to that striving of the will, that conflict with difficulty which we call effort. Easy, pleasant work, does not make robust minds, does not give men such a consciousness of their powers; does not train to endurance, to perseverance, to study, to force of will—that force, without which all other acquisitions avail nothing."

I shall have occasion again to refer to this subject, in connexion with the formation of an earnest Christian character. Let me, before closing this chapter, bring before you the fact, that a life thus spent is the only happy one.

The consciousness that the great end of existence is fulfilling—that the talents bestowed by the Great Author of Being are employed to their destined purpose, and that preparation is being made for a life devoted to usefulness, yea, even that it is already begun, may well fill the mind with joy and thankfulness. So deeply was the happiness of a life thus spent impressed on the mind of one of God's most devoted servants, that we find him praying, "Lord, let me not live to be useless."

We have spoken of the void experienced by those who live without an end in life. When that end is attained, the spirit finds true peace and lasting repose. "The heart is restless till it finds rest in Thee," was the language of one who had tried

worldly pleasures, and at last found true happiness in a life of devotedness to God.

Contrast the calm and settled peace enjoyed by the earnest Christian, with the turbulent and restless life of the votary of fashion. The former delights to dwell on the prospects death will unfold to him ; the latter seeks to drown in dissipation all recollection of the too certain event. Hear, my beloved young friends, the language of a devoted missionary when near the termination of his arduous life :— “ My heaven is to please God and glorify Him, and to give all to Him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory : that is the heaven I long for ; that is my religion, and that is my happiness, and always was, ever since I knew anything of true religion ; and all those that are of that religion shall meet me in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced ; but to give honour to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there ; but to love, and please, and glorify God, is all. Had I a thousand souls, if they were worth anything, I would give them all to God ; but I have nothing to give when all is done. It is impossible for any rational creature to be happy without acting all for God. I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying God with the holy angels : all my desire is to glorify God. It is a

great comfort to me, to think that I have done a little for God in the world ! Oh, it is but a very small matter ; yet I have done a little, and I lament that I have not done more for Him. There is nothing in the world worth living for, but doing good, and finishing God's work ; doing the work that Christ did. I see nothing else in the world that can yield any satisfaction, besides living to God, pleasing Him, and doing his whole will.”*

To turn from this bright picture is painful ; but it may be profitable for us to view the other side for a few moments. Hear now, and mark, my dear readers, the awful contrast. The following is an extract from a letter dictated by Madame du Deffant (a French woman of fashion) to Horace Walpole, a short time before her death :—“ Tell me why, detesting life, I yet dread to die. Nothing convinces me that anything will survive myself ; on the contrary, I perceive the dissolution of my mind as well as that of my body. All that is said on the one side or the other makes no impression upon me ; I only listen to my own sensations, and I find only doubt and obscurity. ‘ Believe,’ I am told ; ‘ that is the safest way ; ’ but how can I believe that which I do not understand ? If I am not pleased with others, I am still less so with myself. I have more difficulty in enduring myself than any

* Brainard.

one besides." This state of mind was what might have been anticipated from the society in which she had, during life, delighted ; that, namely, of Voltaire, Grimm, Hume, and the rest of the philosophers. Her melancholy end was in precise accordance with the tenor of her life. Death seized her whilst in the act of playing at cards, in the midst of a circle of her gay and thoughtless friends. So little concerned were the rest of the party at the solemn event which had just occurred, that they resolved, with a hardened indifference rarely to be equalled, to play out their game before they gave the alarm.* We may well shudder at such a conclusion to this life of folly and sinful dissipation ; and let us earnestly watch and pray that our closing scene may be a far different one. Let us now begin the Christian life ; seek to fulfil our appointed mission on earth ; see to it that the influence we exercise be a high and a holy one ; diligently cultivate every talent we possess ; then shall we truly realize the happiness of the earnest life.

* From "Life's Last Hours," a valuable little work published by the Tract Society.

CHAPTER III.

HINTS FOR THE FORMATION OF AN EARNEST CHARACTER—
DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME—MENTAL PROGRESSION
—THE INNER LIFE—THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

"Wake! thou that sleepest in enchanted bowers,
Lest these last years should haunt thee in the night,
When death is waiting for thy number'd hours
To take their swift and everlasting flight ;
Wake! ere the earth-born charm unnerve thee quite,
And be thy thoughts to work divine address'd ;
Do something—do it soon—with all thy might :
'Tis infamy to die and not be miss'd,
Or let all soon forget that thou didst e'er exist.

Some high or humble enterprise of good
Contemplate, till it shall possess thy mind,
Become thy study, pastime, rest, and food,
And kindle in thy heart a flame refin'd ;
Pray Heaven for firmness thy whole soul to bind
To this thy purpose—to begin, pursue,
With thoughts all fixed, and feelings purely kind ;
Strength to complete, and with delight review,
And grace to give the praise where all is ever due."

Wilcox.

"The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between men, between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is *energy*, invincible determination, a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in the world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities can make a two-legged creature a man without it." — *Sir Fowell Buxton.*

CHAPTER III.

I AM now anxious to give you a definition of an earnest character, that you may be enabled to judge how nearly you approach to its requirements.

The word *earnest* is derived from the Saxon *eornest*, and means ardent, zealous, eager. It is important that, in our consideration of this character, you always associate it with that of one who is eager for the best things.* It is an awful and overwhelming truth, that if talent be not directed aright, it may prove a source of misery to the possessor, and of alarming evil to those who move within the sphere of its influence. An able illustration of this is given by the Rev. W. Howells, in the following words :—"A common and every-day object shall express my meaning. A man of consummate talents, devoid of high principles, is to my mind a steam-engine without a driver ! You have an instrument of resistless force before you, without any directing, controlling, or governing power. So

* James's "Church in Earnest."

abandoned, calculate, if you can, the amount of mischief it may generate."

I am anxious, then, that in contemplating this subject, we keep constantly in view, that, unless our earnestness be *Christian* earnestness, our labour will be of no avail; but after a life of restless activity, we may still find we have utterly failed in the great end of life.

One of the best writers upon this subject has given a definition which I think may assist us in our search. "Life is a probation and a discipline for eternity. We are here to obtain salvation, to enjoy its first-fruits, and to hasten for the full possession. And now just glance at the representation of the state of mind the Scripture represents those to be in who are pursuing this salvation; and in reference to it, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,' *i.e.*, let this be the object of your most intense desire; most eager, constant, and persevering pursuit, so that everything else shall be brought into subordination to it. 'We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal,' *i.e.*, Our eye is constantly upon eternity. We see all things in their relations to this, and can scarcely see anything else. We regu-

late all our conduct by a regard to eternity. We are so little affected by temporal things, that we seem scarcely to exist, while heavenly and eternal things seem to be the only realities."

The first requisite, then, for the formation of this character, is a deep consciousness of the end of existence, as I have endeavoured to put it before you in the preceding chapters. There must be, united to this, an entire dependance upon Almighty wisdom and strength; a constant looking to the Saviour, for whose sake alone you will receive the supply of wisdom and strength that you need.

The work also to which you are now to apply is no slight one; and were it not that all needful help is promised to you, I should feel it impossible you should ever attain your object.

"Nature will raise up all her strife,
Reluctant to the heavenly life,
Loth in a Saviour's death to share,
His daily cross compelled to bear."

Nevertheless, this object is so important that nothing can justify any neglect or delay in the immediate commencement of your work. You are now at an age when the character you acquire will remain with you through life. Your friends may have watched over you with the most anxious and tender care. The most lavish expense may have been bestowed upon your education; and yet, if you do

not yourself come forth to the conflict, you will pass on through life, as one of those described by the poet :—

“The epitome of common life is seen in the common epitaph :

Born on such a day, and dead on such another,
With an interval of threescore years.”

But I hope better things of you than that you will thus live, unmindful of the present being a state of probation, and forgetful of the future. It may be some encouragement to you to know how successful persons of your own age have been in the attainment of the object you seek. Hear the experience of one of the most earnest men of our own times.*

“I am sure that a young man may do very much what he pleases. In my own case it was so. I left school, where I had learnt little or nothing, at about the age of fourteen. I spent the next year at home, learning to hunt and shoot. Then it was that the prospect of going to college opened upon me, and such thoughts as I have expressed in this letter occurred to my mind. I made my resolutions, and I acted up to them. I gave up all desultory reading ; I never looked into a novel or a newspaper. I gave up shooting. During the five years I was in Ireland, I had the liberty of going when I pleased to a capital shooting place ; I never

* Sir Fowell Buxton.

went but twice. In short, I considered every hour as precious, and I made everything bend to my determination not to be behind any of my companions ; and thus I speedily passed from one species of character to another. I had been a boy fond of pleasure and idleness, reading only books of unprofitable entertainment ; I became speedily a youth of steady habits, of application, and irresistible resolution. I soon gained the ground I had lost ; and I found those things which were difficult and almost impossible to my idleness, easy enough to my industry ; and much of my happiness, and all my prosperity in life, have resulted from the change I made at your age. It all rests with yourself. If you seriously resolve to be energetic and industrious, depend upon it you will, for your whole life, have reason to rejoice that you were wise enough to form and to act upon that determination."

This great man looked with the keenest interest on the progress of those younger than himself ; and when contemplating the position of a young friend in whose future welfare he was deeply interested, thus writes :—" He is now at a very critical period of life. In a few months he will leave home, and his fate and fortunes will mainly depend on the degree of vigour of character which he will then display. Deliver him, O Lord, from

fading resolutions, from feeble and unstable purposes, from an idle, wavering mind, and from habits of self-indulgence. Give him firmness of purpose, enable him to take hold on his object with a vigorous and manly grasp. Give him industry and perseverance ; and clear judgment to resolve, and, once resolved, an inflexible determination. But let this strength of character be based on better than human foundations ; let it be given by Thee, limited, corrected, kept within bounds by Thee. Oh, that he may be able in after-life to ascribe his success to the Lord, and to say with David, ‘It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect.’”*

* Sir Fowell Buxton had at one time thought of preparing a little work for the young, and had collected materials which he headed, “Hints for Maxims for the Young.” The following are some of these, and are most valuable, affording subject for thought and improvement to the earnest student :—
“Mankind in general mistake possibilities for impossibilities. That is the difference between those who effect and those who do not.” “People of weak judgment are most timid, as horses half blind are most apt to start.” “Burke, in a letter to Miss Shackleton, says, ‘Thus much in favour of activity and occupation, that the more one has to do the more one is capable of doing, even beyond our direct task.’” “Plato—‘Better to err in acts than principles.’” “Idleness the greatest prodigality.” “Two kinds of idleness—a listless and an active.” “If industrious, we should direct our industry to right ends.” “Possibly it may require as much industry to be the best billiard player as to be senior

Perhaps it will assist us rightly to understand this important subject, if I endeavour to enumerate to you the causes which appear to operate against the formation of an earnest character. When contemplating the characters of the young by whom I am surrounded, I immediately perceive that they are divided into two large classes. This division is not *nominal*, but it is, nevertheless, *real*. If I follow the daily lives of the one class, I see a life given by its Creator for the noblest end passing away in a succession of frivolous employments, not one of which has a relation to the future prospects of the immortal spirit. If to such a person I speak of high aspirations and glorious hopes, no answering intelligence is seen in the countenance, but a pained expression, as of one who is suddenly interrupted in

wrangler." "The endowments of nature we cannot command, but we can cultivate those given." "My experience is that men of great talent are apt to do nothing for want of vigour." "Vigour, energy, resolution, firmness of purpose—these carry the day." "Is there any one whom difficulties dishearten, who bends to the storm? He will do little. Is there one who will conquer?—that kind of man never fails." "Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw; some iron in you." "Let men know that what you say you will do, that your decision made is final; no wavering; that once resolved you are not to be allured or intimidated. Acquire and maintain that character."

the midst of enjoyment, by unpleasant reflections.* Alas ! how many are thus buried in fearful slumber, some of whom may never wake from that awful state, till the lamp of life is burned out, and they pass into the presence of their Judge to give an account of their stewardship !

“And this is death in life, to be sunk beneath the waters
of the Actual,

Without one feebly struggling sense of an airier spiritual
realm.”

Where shall I find language to express the

* “The high and the low, the young and the old, the busy and the idle, alike shun acquaintance with God, as if his very name brought uneasiness, and disturbed our comfort and repose. If we mention God to the young, we too often seem to be troubling them with what they had rather forget in such early days, while the aged dislike to be reminded of their misfortune, that their time on earth is drawing near to an end. If we mention God to the gay and happy, we appear to be interfering with their pleasures. If we mention Him to the great and to the learned, they will intimate that such subjects belong rather to a humbler class and station. But the poor and laborious, on their part, refer us to those who have more information and more leisure. Thus a large portion of mankind in all classes, strive to keep God out of their thoughts, and to live, so far as in them lies, without Him in the world. Yes, without Him, who, as the Apostle says, is not far from any one of us : ‘for in Him we live and move and have our being.’ Why should they act so strangely and unreasonably if they believed that an acquaintance with God would give them peace ? ”—*Bishop J. B. Sumner.*

anguish of heart with which the servant of God is overwhelmed, when he looks forward to the future destiny of these unhappy persons ! In tender love he would admonish, warn, entreat ; but they are secure beneath the panoply of their worldly vanity, and no conviction can find entrance beneath it ; their sleep is so profound that they have no real consciousness of existence, and to them the happiness of the earnest, wakeful spirit is unknown. I have spoken of the one class, let me now endeavour to give you some idea of the other. A deep conviction of the proper end of existence, a concentrated energy in carrying out objects tending towards that end, an anxious desire to cultivate to the utmost every talent bestowed by their Creator, a constant view to mental progression, and a deep attention and cognizance of the inner life of the soul, such are the characteristics of minds belonging to this class.

We will now mention some of the great hindrances to the formation of such a character as the one last described. The first undoubtedly is the *absence of serious reflection as to the great end of life* ; and, again, *habitual levity, worldly associates and pleasures, mental inertia and self-deception*.

In opposition to these, you will first seek to have ever in view the chief good, the great end of life, the ultimate “object of pursuit.” An excellent

definition has been given of this by a pious author : “ It must be an object suited to the nature of man as a rational creature ; an object which, if sought in a right manner, shall, with absolute certainty, be obtained ; which shall not interfere with any of the necessary duties of the present state ; which, when obtained, shall not only please but satisfy the mind ; which shall prepare us for our eternal state of existence, and accompany us to the unseen world as our portion for ever. Your main business on earth is to obtain the salvation of your immortal soul. Let this conviction lie at the bottom of your whole character ; let it be thoroughly wrought into the contexture of all your mental habits ; let it be the main wheel in the whole machinery of your conduct. It is recorded of a pilgrim on his way to Jerusalem, that in passing through Constantinople, when that city was in its glory, he met with a friend, who wishing to detain him in the eastern metropolis, took him about to see the beauties of that celebrated place. ‘ Very splendid ! ’ exclaimed the pilgrim ; ‘ but this is not the holy city.’ So should we say to everything which would detain our hearts on earth, ‘ Very good in its place ; but it is not salvation.’ ”*

Let me entreat you, my dear young friends, to act upon this principle. Make all things subservient

* James.

to it, and determine that, whatever may be the cost, you will give up all that you find tending to keep you from realizing the great end of your existence.

I have mentioned *habitual levity*, as one of the great hinderances to the attainment of the earnest character. Few young persons view the indulgence of a light and trifling spirit as a sin, and yet it is most assuredly a heavy one in the sight of Him who searcheth the heart. The testimony of the dying Wilberforce Richmond to his sister H—, is on this subject most striking. “H—,” he said, “there is nothing so opposed to religion—to the mind of Christ—as levity and trifling ; it will keep you back more than anything. Take my solemn warning—I speak from my own experience —you will never be a consistent Christian, and you will never grow in grace if you indulge in habitual trifling conversation ; it is not like the mind of Christ. Your temper is very playful and volatile, and Satan may use it as a snare to injure your soul : piety and levity cannot long dwell in the same heart. One will destroy the other.”

Let us, my beloved readers, now turn to the pages of inspired writ, and hear the will of God, as there revealed to us, in connexion with this subject ; then ask yourselves if such is not opposed to the “foolish talking and jesting,” in which you

may be conscious of having too often indulged. We will first mark the description given by the apostle of the tongue : “ And the tongue is a world of iniquity ; so is the tongue among our members, that defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.”—James iii. 6. This describes the use to which the unregenerate man will put this important member ; but hear and take to your hearts the words addressed to the Church of God, and to each individual composing it: “ Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth ; but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”—Ephes. iv. 29. “ Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice ; and grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephes. iv. 30, 31. “ But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications, out of your mouth.”—Col. iii. 8. “ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs ; making melody in your hearts to the Lord.”—Ephes. iii. 9, 18, 19.

The worldling and the thoughtless votary of pleasure, will perhaps turn from this inspired admonition, and faithful to the picture presented of them in the word of truth, will say, “ Our lips

are our own ; who is Lord over us ?"—Psalm xii. 4, forgetting that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment, and that a God of infinite wisdom has declared, "that a fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips the snare of his soul."—Prov. xvii. 7.

One of our most able writers has thus spoken of the habitual jester : "He who never relaxes into sportiveness is a wearisome companion ; *but* beware of him who jests at everything ; such men disparage, by some ludicrous association, all objects which are presented to their thoughts, and *thereby render themselves incapable of any emotion which can either elevate or soften them* ; *they bring upon their moral being an influence more withering than the blasts of the desert.*"

Far removed from the levity of the thoughtless, is the calm and rational cheerfulness of the earnest Christian. Who, I may ask you, has so great a right to be contented and joyous, as one who lives in sure and certain hope of at last arriving at the haven of eternal blessedness ? It was a favourite saying of old Izaak Walton, "I will tell you what I have heard a great divine say, that God had two dwellings ; one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart." And this may also well be called the secret of the Christian's joy. He lives in constant communion with his God, he walks in

the light of his reconciled countenance. “To him earthly things and heavenly things, are only successive acts of the great drama of existence.”

Shrink not, my young friends, from the attempt to conquer the habitual levity in which you have, perchance, till now indulged. Ask for strength from on high, and you will assuredly receive it ; carry this, with all your other temptations, to the throne of grace, and you will receive the help you need.

Hannah More has said, “Evils which are ruining us for want of attention to them, lessen from the moment our attention to them begins.” If you will but give earnest consideration to this subject, half your difficulties will vanish ; for it is the absence of serious thought which is often the occasion of continuance in this sin.

Worldly associates will also have much to do with your indulgence in this habit, and will prove great hinderances in your path.

There is a beautiful little Persian apologue, which expresses the influence of those with whom we associate. “One day, as I was in the bath, a friend of mine put into my hand a piece of scented clay. I took it, and said to it, ‘Art thou musk or ambergris, for I am charmed with thy perfume ? It answered, ‘I was a despicable piece of clay, but I was some time in the company of the rose ; the

sweet quality of my companion was communicated to me, otherwise I should be only a piece of clay, as I appear to thee.’” Aptly does this illustrate the effect produced upon our minds by those who are our constant companions. “Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou doest,” is an old proverb, but a very true one ; and it is of the greatest importance, that, in aiming at the earnest character, you ask yourself the kind of influence exercised over you by those who are your most intimate friends. I know the temptation often offered to the young, by the society of the light-hearted and gay ; and I would, therefore, speak to you, my dear young friends, tenderly, and yet faithfully and truly. If you expect, through God’s help, to be enabled to attain to the earnest Christian character, you must first part with *all* worldly associates. “How can two walk together, unless they are agreed ?” If you are decided, through Divine help, to set before you in all things the one great end of your being, and to live a life of devotedness to God, think you that your worldly friends will leave their career of self-indulgence and earthly pleasure, to go with you to the sick-bed of the dying, the humble dwelling of the poor ; or the Sunday-school ? Will they give up their hours of dissipation to join you in the quiet retirement of your study, there to draw from God’s revealed word

fresh stores of wisdom and knowledge, for your future path? No, my beloved readers, this can never be, unless the grace of God affect their hearts; but to you his voice sounds with solemn power, and I pray that you may hearken unto it,—“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.” (2 Cor. vi. 17.)

In giving up your worldly companions, you will also renounce worldly pleasures.* Let me ask what are the objects of a life of gaiety? “The sole object of it is the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense. To eat, drink, and be merry, is its motto. To pass time as free as possible from thought and

* “There is a certain magic or charm in company, for it will assimilate and make you like to them, by much conversation with them; if they be good company, it is a great means to make you good, or to confirm you in goodness; but if they be bad, it is twenty to one but they will infect and corrupt you. Therefore be wary and shy in choosing and entertaining, or frequenting any company or companions: be not too hasty in committing yourself to them; stand off awhile, till you have inquired of some, that you know by experience to be faithful, what they are; observe what company they keep. Be not too easy to gain acquaintance, but stand off, keep a distance yet awhile, till you have observed and learnt somewhat touching them. Men or women that are greedy of acquaintance, or hasty in it, are oftentimes snared in ill company before they are aware, and entangled so that they cannot easily get loose from it after, when they would.”—*Sir Matthew Hale.*

care; to shun all that is gloomy and melancholy; to seek enjoyment in the crowded, gay assembly, at the resorts of fashion—at the theatre, the opera, the ball-room, and the race-course. This seems to be the life in which the votaries of pleasure expect to realize the consummation of felicity; this heartless, selfish, sensual life—a life of which the aim is to make themselves act and think as little like reflecting and intelligent and rational beings as they can, and to make this world and worldly good the great scope and aim and end of life. Thousands enter on this kind of life, expecting it to be one of supreme felicity; but all, sooner or later, ends in disappointment, vexation, and vanity. If ever it were true that a smile concealed inward mortification, it is so in regard to that world of pleasure. All is hollow in it. There is in it no real tenderness or sympathy. Its followers gather around the idol of fashion or popularity, but the moment he slackens in the chase, they cast him aside. In a prayerless, godless life, true happiness never can be found. All that constitutes the richest and sweetest joy which the soul tastes must be unknown there. No communion with God, no prospect of a blissful futurity, no blessed hope of immortality, while the sum of it is vanity and disappointment of spirit." The struggle may be severe, but the sacrifice *must*

be made. Utterly opposed, you must be aware, are the objects of such a life as that above described, from those of the one at which you aim. Be but decided, my dear young friends, and you will soon find the first effort is the most trying. "C'est le premier pas qui coute" is true in this as in other respects.

One who became a devoted and useful servant of God, has described the conflict which passed through her mind when called to give up her worldly pleasures and companions :—

"Come, my fond fluttering heart,
 Come, struggle to be free!
Thou and the world must part,
 However hard it be:
My trembling spirit owns it just,
 But cleaves yet closer to the dust.

Ye tempting sweets, forbear ;
 Ye dearest idols, fall ;
My love ye must not share,
 Jesus shall have it all :
'T is bitter pain, 't is cruel smart,
 But, ah ! thou must consent, my heart.

Ye fair, enchanting throng—
 Ye golden dreams, farewell !
Earth has prevailed too long,
 And now I break the spell,
Ye cherish'd joys of early years :
 Jesus, forgive these parting tears !

But must I part with all ?
My heart still fondly pleads ;
Yes ! Dagon's self must fall ;
It beats, it throbs, it bleeds.
Is there no balm in Gilead found
To soothe and heal the smarting wound ?

Oh, yes ! there is a balm,
A kind Physician there,
My fever'd mind to calm,
To bid me not despair.
Aid me, dear Saviour, set me free,
And I will all resign to thee !

Oh, may I feel thy worth,
And let no idol dare,
No vanity of earth,
With thee, my Lord, compare !
Now bid all worldly joys depart,
And reign supremely in my heart ! ” *

There is one condition of mind, to which I think may be referred much of the indifference to an earnest life that we behold in the world ; I allude to a state which I cannot better describe than by the term mental inertness. It has been truly said, that “the mass of nominal Christians live three-score years, and die without having had one earnest thought, one difficulty, or one misgiving ;” and this exactly describes the condition to which I allude. Not only do such persons do nothing, but there is a positive resistance on their part to being made

* Jane Taylor.

partakers of anything likely to prove progressive. They are perfectly satisfied to vegetate, or rather to remain stationary for life, without receiving one additional idea during the whole course of their existence, and quite happy to have their intellectual enjoyments limited by the sluggish perceptions of their senses, forgetting that such “Idleness is the Dead Sea that swallows all virtues, and the self-made sepulchre of a living man.”

It was Dr. Johnson’s opinion, that many persons have such an objection to intellectual labour, that even supposing knowledge to be more easily attainable, more people would be content to be ignorant, than would take even a little pains to acquire it. Persons of this class alike forget their heavy responsibility and their own chances of happiness here and hereafter. They have no idea of life being anything more than a state of listless enjoyment. Their only labour is to make the time pass as rapidly as possible ; and thus they are carried down the stream, confounded with the giddy and careless multitude, who join them in “pleasure’s reckless train.”

An eloquent writer* has observed, “Reject as a deadly heresy the seductive notion that a career of self-indulgence is, under any circumstance, defensible. A life of luxuriant seclusion cannot

* Channing.

be other than culpable ; it is abhorrent to the plainest purposes of our being. The end of existence is mindful of the coming future, to instruct, bless, and benefit others."

It is for your own happiness, my dear readers, that you should not sink into this state of inertia. The active, energetic mind, has pleasures of which those buried in mental slumber have no conception. I have somewhere read that, in the early days of Christianity, a religious recluse betook himself to a cave in Upper Egypt, which, in the time of the Pharaohs, had been a deposit for mummies ; that he prayed there morning, noon, and night, eating only of the dates which some neighbouring trees afforded, and drinking of the water of the Nile. At length, the hermit became weary of life, and then he prayed still more earnestly. After this duty, one day, he fell asleep, and the vision of an angel appeared to him in a dream, commanding him to arise, and cut down a neighbouring palm-tree, and make a rope of its fibres, and after it was done, the angel would appear to him again. The hermit awoke, and instantly applied himself to obey the vision. He travelled about, from place to place, many days, before he could procure an axe ; and during this journey he felt happier than he had been for many years. His prayers were now short and few ; but what they wanted in length and

number, they made up in fervency. Having returned with the axe, he cut down the tree, and with much labour and assiduity, during several days, prepared the fibres to make the rope ; and after a continuance of daily occupation for some weeks completed the command. The vision that night appeared to the hermit, as promised, and thus addressed him : “ You are now no longer weary of life, but happy. Know, then, that man was made for labour, and prayer also is his duty ; the one as well as the other is essential to his well-being. Arise in the morning, take the cord, and with it gird up thy loins, and go forth into the world ; and let it be a memorial to thee of what God expects from man, if he would be blessed with happiness on earth.”

Connected with this state of mental inertia and thoughtless inaction will be a most dangerous condition of self-deception. Unaware of the danger to which they are exposed, the unhappy victims of this delusion stand upon the brink of a precipice, which may at any moment give way and bury them beneath its ruins. Sometimes on the bed of death conviction comes (perchance too late), and all the horrors of an awakened conscience startle and rack the dying sinner.

It was well said, “ Life’s evening, we may rest assured, will take its character from the day which

has preceded it ; and if we would close our career in the comfort of religious hope, we must prepare for it by early and continuous religious habits ?” * Absorbed by the passing occurrences of life, too many deceive themselves as to their actual state. Unaccustomed to self-examination, they know not their real danger, and, like the ostrich, which buries her head in the sand and thinks herself safe because she cannot see her pursuers, so these unhappy ones deem themselves far from danger because they are blinded as to its approach. Short will be their security, and solemn will be their awakening. “ In the hour when ye think not, the Son of man cometh.” Soon to them the day of mercy will be past, and all hope will be for ever fled away.

Attendant upon this self-deception will be a false estimate of the position really occupied in the world by its victim, and hence vanity, with all her attendant handmaidens, will be ever near to whisper flattering and lying words. To careful observers, the look of self-approbation and of gratified pride will be but too painfully obvious, and often will a sigh arise in their bosoms, when contemplating the perfect self-deception of such young persons. But I will not dwell, my beloved readers, upon this painful subject ; let me rather turn to you, and rejoice that you are at least awakened to a desire to

* Shuttleworth.

escape from such a foe ; that you are seeking the enlightening influences of God's Holy Spirit to illuminate your minds, and to reveal to you your actual state. Do not rest until you feel that it is truly made known to you ; and though you may be startled by the first discoveries, and shrink back overwhelmed with the consciousness of your condition, do not despair ; but relying upon the precious promises of Scripture, go forward in the path marked out for you.

Mental progression will be one of the great objects constantly set before you. The earnest character is progressive in all its attainments. There can be no standing still to a mind of this class. "I press to the mark of the prize of my high calling in Christ Jesus," was the language of the holy apostle, and into this declaration you will fully enter, if you are an earnest Christian : you will find —

"No height of daring is so high, but higher
The earnest soul may yet find grace to climb :
Truth springeth out of truth—the loftiest flyer
That soareth on the sweep of thought sublime,
Resteth at length, and still beyond doth guess
Truth infinite, as God towards which to press."

Every power of the mind will be engaged in this glorious struggle ; you will feel by degrees your faculties expand and your mental energy increase.

Fresh fields of intellectual delight will open before you, and—

“The soul, after soaring for awhile round the cloud-capped
Andes of reflection,
Glad in its conscious immortality, leaveth a world behind,
To dare, at one bold flight, the broad Atlantic to another.”*

Far different is the case with those who have no perception of this mighty power. Foster records it as his observation, “that most ladies who have had what is considered as an education, have no idea of an education progressive through life. Having attained a certain measure of accomplishment, knowledge, manners, &c., they consider themselves as made up, and so take their station: they are pictures, which, being quite finished, are now put in a frame, a gilded one if possible, and hung up in permanence of beauty!—permanence, that is to say, till old Time, with his rude and dirty fingers, soil the charming colours.”

This idea of the completion of education when a girl leaves school is a not uncommon one. It has been well displayed by Jane Taylor, who describes a young lady of this character, congratulating herself upon having returned home *thoroughly educated*. Her self-complacency is great as she enumerates the different things she has studied,

* Proverbial Philosophy.

and the accomplishments she has acquired. She rejoices in the fact, that *her education is completed*. An old philosopher, who has devoted a lifetime to science and learning, in a humble strain reviews his acquirements, and laments the little knowledge he has been able to obtain. "Alas!" he concludes, "what then have I gained by my laborious researches, but a humbling conviction of my weakness and ignorance? Of how little has man at his best estate to boast! What folly in man to glory in his contracted powers, or to raise himself upon his imperfect acquisitions!"

Consider your education, my dear young friends, as only now beginning; date its commencement from the time when you first awoke to a perception of the inner life, and the vast field of inquiry and improvement open before you.

Having once entered upon a life of mental progression, you must not relax from your purpose, but courageously press onward. "No instrument is so decidedly and continually improved as the mind; and you must remember that real discipline of mind does not so much consist in now and then making great efforts, as in having the mind so trained, that it will make constant efforts."* I shall not fear for you, if you once begin this work, for its reward is so invigorating and sensible that

* Dale's "Todd's Student's Guide."

it is not often that, when once an impetus has been given, the happy individual can return to the former state of quiet inertia. And having once commenced your course, expect it ever to continue. Determine that it shall do so ; never rest satisfied until you feel that each day brings you some new idea or some valuable information ; and take good heed to it, my beloved readers, that in this thirst for knowledge you are ever proceeding upon the right foundation. Bring all your newly-acquired ideas to the test of truth—the precious touchstone of God's holy Word. “The march of intellect,” writes Southey, “is proceeding at quick-time, and if the progress be not accompanied by a corresponding improvement in morals and religion, the faster it proceeds, with the more violence will you be hurried down the road to ruin ;” but if all your studies are carried on in the fear of God, and you seek in them but a means to the great end of glorifying Him on earth in your day and generation, rest assured you will be guided by his Holy Spirit into the way of truth.

Closely connected with this important subject will be your acquaintance with the “inner life.” “*Think of living*” was the pregnant maxim of the thoughtful German. “Thy life,” says another, quoting the above, “wert thou the pitifullest of the sons of earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn

reality. It is thy own ; it is all thou hast to confront eternity with. Work, then, *like a star,* unhaunting, yet unresting.”*

You, perhaps, inquire, What is this inner life ? It is the life of the Spirit ; it is a consciousness of intellectual existence ; it is the wakeful life, as opposed to the state of mental inertia and careless indifference, which I have before described. Robert Hall thus speaks of those who are satisfied to pass through life without this consciousness : “ Men are content to have no more intimate sense of their existence than what they feel in the exercise of their faculties on extraneous objects. The vital being, with all its agency and emotions, is so blended and absorbed in these its exterior interests, that it is very rarely collected and concentrated in the consciousness of its own absolute *self*, so as to be recognised as a thing internal, apart, and alone, for its own inspection and knowledge. Men carry their minds as for the most part they carry their watches, content to be ignorant of the constitution and action within, and attentive only to the little exterior circle of things, to which the passions, like indexes, are pointing. It is surprising to see how little self-knowledge a person not watchfully observant of himself may have gained, in the whole course of an active, or even an inquisitive life. He may

* Bonar.

have lived almost an age, and traversed a continent, minutely examining its curiosities, and interpreting the half-obliterated characters on its monuments, unconscious the while of a process operating on his own mind, to impress or to erase characteristics of much more importance to him than all the figured brass or marble that Europe contains. After having explored many a cavern, or dark ruinous avenue, he may have left undetected a darker recess within, where there would be much more striking discoveries."

Self-knowledge attained by prayerful self-examination is the root from whence then must spring your acquaintance with the inner life. It is this study that has occupied the attention of all holy men, and is ever associated with the earnest Christian character.

Let us go back to the fourth century after Christ, and enter into the Christian retirement of St. Gregory, one of the early fathers of the Church.

"What was I before I was born? What am I now? What shall I be to-morrow? A thick film seemed to obscure my mental view. I asked the learned to guide me, but I found no one who knew any more than myself.

"Wrapped in impenetrable clouds, I wander from desire to desire, without being able to satisfy myself respecting the object of my wishes, not even

with the illusions of a dream. This fleshly frame, in which we are held captive, intercepts every ray of light. I exist—what does the word mean? teach me! Already, while I speak, a portion of my existence has escaped me. I am no longer what I was. What shall I be to-morrow, should I still exist? In no one thing stable, in no one thing permanent. I resemble the waters of a stream, which perpetually flow on, which nothing stops. Or rather—out of all the objects which surround me—to what can I compare myself? Like the brook, in another moment, I shall be no longer the same I was the moment before. I ought to be called by some other name. You seize me now, you hold me, yet I escape. Fugitive wave, never again will you traverse the space over which you have already flowed. The same man whom you have reflected in your waters will never again be reflected by them, exactly as he looked in them before.”*

Another of the early fathers, St. Augustine, who was the great instrument of reviving the knowledge of evangelical truth, after the increase of monastic darkness and superstition, thus communes with his God and his soul: “Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. My soul is a habitation too narrow for thy entrance, do thou enlarge it. It is in ruins,

* Book of the Fathers.

do thou repair it. It has what must offend thine eyes, I know and must confess ; but who shall cleanse it ? or to whom shall I cry, but to Thee ? Cleanse me from my secret faults, and keep me from presumptuous sins. I believe, and therefore speak. Happy is he who loves Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thy sake. God of power, turn us, and show Thy face, and we shall be saved. For wherever the soul of man turns itself, it fixes upon sorrow, except in Thee. Be not vain, my soul, and make not the ear of thy heart deaf with the tumult of vanity. The Word itself calls to thee to return ; there is the place of rest, not to be disturbed. There with God fix thy mansion, there intrust whatever thou hast, my soul, when fatigued with vanities. If souls please thee, love them in God, and carry them with thee to Him, as many as thou canst, and say to them : ‘Let us love Him ; He made these things, and He is not far off. The good ye love is from Him ; but it will deservedly be bitter, if ye love it to excess ; deserting Him.’”

Thus does the experience of all Christians witness to the reality of the inner life, and the importance of its apprehension. The word may be new to you, my dear young friends ; but the subject is one that has been understood by God’s servants, through all ages of the Church. To philosophers

and profound thinkers, it has ever afforded a theme for frequent and diligent thought. "Death," says Seneca, "falls heavy upon him, who is too much known to others, and too little to himself."

Chillingworth, a profound thinker, of the seventeenth century, tells us, "that we should consider these things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves."

Johnson tells us, that Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it from his tomb. "I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or more properly, who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness, cannot know thee; but I entreat thee to know thyself."

To our own Addison, the contemplation of the inner life of the soul was an ever-fruitful source of delight. "With what astonishment and veneration," he writes, "may we look into our souls, where there are such hidden stores of virtue and knowledge, such inexhausted sources of perfection. We know not yet what we shall be, nor will it ever 'enter into the heart of man to conceive' the glory that will be always in reserve for him. The soul, considered with relation to its Creator, is like

one of those mathematical lines which may draw nearer to another for all eternity, without a possibility of touching it ; and can there be a thought so transporting, as to consider ourselves in these perpetual approaches to Him, who is not only the standard of perfection, but of happiness ?”

Will you not seek, my beloved young friends, thus to rise to a full consciousness of the glorious destiny that is marked out for you ? Will you not begin the work, even now, while youth and strength are yours ? Strive to watch the dawnings of this intellectual life, trace its progress, constrain all the powers of your mind to deep and serious reflection ; soon you will *feel* your reward in the conviction of increased power over this inner life. You will apprehend its workings, you will realize its existence, you will view, as from an eminence, the position and responsibilities of your immortal spirit, you will form a correct estimate of its capabilities ; and this constant and calm habit of self-contemplation will prepare you at any moment for vigorous action, when the providence of God calls you forth.

I have spoken of those who live but for pleasure, “ who know no end of existence but passing enjoyment ; ” of those who live in a state of quiescent contentment, described by Foster as belonging to “ the crowd of those who are faithfully stamped,

like bank-notes, with the same marks, with the difference only of being worth more guineas or fewer ; who are mere particles of a class, mere pieces and bits of the great vulgar or the small ; whose history is to be found in newspaper chronicle, or the gossip's or the sexton's narrative. Whose characters are moulded in the manufactory of custom, and set forth like images of clay, of kindred shapes, and varnished, from a pottery."* Will you belong to these, of whose future destiny there can be but one opinion ? or will you now, in the morning of life, begin a course of earnest self-examination, which may lead you to such knowledge of self, that, rightly estimating all you possess and the work to which you are called, you may rise to the full enjoyment of God on earth, and a foretaste of the blessedness prepared for you hereafter ?

It has been well said, "It is only our mortal

* "The true wakeful life is different from all these. It is a thing of intensity and depth. It carries ever about with it the air of calm and restful dignity ; of inward power and greatness. It is fervent, but not feverish ; energetic, but not excited ; speedy in its doings, but not hasty ; prudent, but not timid or selfish ; resolute and fearless, but not rash ; unobtrusive, and sometimes, it may be, silent, yet making all around to feel its influence ; full of joy and peace, yet without parade or noise ; overflowing in tenderness and love, yet at the same time faithful and true."—REV. H. BONAR.

duration that we measure by visible and measurable objects, and there is nothing mournful in the contemplation for one who knows that the Creator made him to be the image of his own eternity, and who feels that, in the desire for immortality, he has sure proof of his capacity for it."

The earnest character is also essentially a truthful one, and this will be seen in every part of it. We are told that a Saxon historian, who wrote at the time of the Conquest, when giving to each king an appropriate title, distinguished Alfred the Great, by that of the TRUTH TELLER ; a noble name, and one that each of you, my dear readers, must try to win.

Let me place before you some of its principal features, and we will take Herbert's definition to assist us in our delineation :—

" Who is the honest man ?—

He that doth still and strongly good pursue,
To God, his neighbour, and himself most true ;

Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin or wrench from giving all their due.

Whom none can work nor woo,
To use in anything a trick or sleight ;
For above all things he abhors deceit ;

His words, and works, and fashion too,
All of a piece, and all are clear and straight."

Lay it down as a fixed principle, that truth

must be associated with all you do ; never can you hope to attain to an earnest character, unless you commence with this great maxim.

"The love of truth," observes an excellent author, "is a most important habit to cultivate, and claims an alliance with the heart as well as the head. No vicious person can be a lover of truth. We ought always to remember that our reasoning faculties were not given us to exercise them as mere whim or fancy might dictate, but to be the active instruments of guiding us into truth, and promoting our happiness as rational and immortal creatures. Unless a love of truth occupies a conspicuous station among our mental excellences, we shall make no progress in real knowledge."*

Taking truth as the basis, there will be a clearness or transparency in your character which will give the stamp of sincerity to all your intercourse with others. You will "dare to be true." It will perhaps require more than one effort of moral courage to speak with perfect truth on all occasions ; but the habit *must* be formed, and the sooner you begin to exercise it the more rapid will be your growth in every other requisite for the earnest character.

You will also not only cultivate its attainment in your own mind, but you will seek to see all around

* Blackney.

you influenced by the same principle. We are told, respecting a brother of M'Cheyne, that "the distinguishing quality of his character was his sensitive truthfulness. In a moment, a shadow would flit across his brow, if any incident were related wherein there was the slightest exaggeration, even when nothing but truth was spoken, if the deliverer seemed to take a false or exaggerated view. He must not only speak the whole truth himself, but he must have the hearer also to apprehend the truth." If this tender and beneficial influence were exerted by all the elder branches of a family, great, without doubt, would be the blessed results. Too often is it the case, that the tone of exaggeration perceived in a youthful circle may be traced to the careless habits, with regard to truth, observed by the elder sisters or brothers.

I have spoken of transparency of character: do you, my beloved readers, know the full value of it? It cannot be too carefully cultivated. "To be willing to appear ignorant when we are so—to own a fault without a vain excuse to conceal or excuse it—to maintain an exact agreement of our professions with our motives, may sometimes put us to pain; but integrity can be obtained at no lower price. This is the maxim we should carry with us into all the details of life:—'To suffer, rather than

to sin,' remembering another of no less wisdom and importance: 'He that does not make conscience in everything will come soon to make conscience in nothing.' It is the little foxes which spoil the tender vines, and a habit of tampering with the moral sense on slight occasions never fails to prepare the mind for greater offences."*

Sir William Templeton was wont to observe, that truth will be uppermost, some time or other, like a cork kept down in water; and often have I had occasion to remark, that those who were led to depart from the course I have recommended to

* "Cunning differs from wisdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine, goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that, where the path is straight and even, he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked, he easily complies with the turns, and avoids the obstructions. But the traveller in the dusk fears more as he sees less; he knows there may be danger, and therefore suspects he is never safe; tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise, lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superiority of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and therefore always keeps himself enveloped in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity."—JOHNSON.

you, have, even in this world, reaped the reward of their sin and folly, in the loss of the affection and esteem of all they love.

Resulting from a truthful character will be an absence of all affectation; your friends will know that you are true, that you are real. You will despise the petty arts which would disguise or rather give a false impression of your character.

A French moralist has said, with great truth, "Nous gagnerions plus de nous laisser voir tels que nous sommes que d'essayer de paraître ce que nous ne sommes pas,"* and be assured, my dear young friends, that this is true in every respect.

Locke speaks of affectation in any part of our carriage, as lighting up a candle to our defects; and he adds, "it never fails to make us to be taken notice of, either as wanting sense or wanting sincerity." Affectation is ever *instantly* perceived. Never think for one moment that you deceive those around you; you are yourselves the deceived if you think so; and it is not only a thing which is visible to all, but it will have a very serious influence upon your happiness, if you allow yourselves to indulge in it. An affected person is a character universally despised. Even the mild and Christian poet, Cowper, is roused from his

* "We gain more by allowing ourselves to be seen such as we are, than by trying to appear that which we are not."

habitual calmness of mind, when he contemplates it, and cries :—

“ In my soul I loathe
All affectation. ‘Tis my perfect scorn ;
Object of my implacable disgust.”

Decision of character will be one of your endowments if you become an earnest-minded person. Having a right estimate of the true end of existence, and acquainted to a greater degree than many with the real extent of your powers, you will not hesitate, when a line of conduct appears to you right, immediately to enter upon it. Instead of contenting yourself with thinking how pleasant it would be to realize the reward of the diligent seeker, you will not be satisfied without obtaining it.

Advancing, in humble dependance on the promised help of your Heavenly Father, and with a heartfelt determination to glorify Him in all your undertakings, you will find yourself urged on with an irresistible force to execute promptly the serious determinations you have been led to form. Decision of character will be seen in every action of your life: it will not be confined to the more enlarged field of usefulness upon which you may be called to enter, but will equally be manifested under all circumstances.

A remarkable instance of this was seen in the late Hannah More, and I shall place it before you,

that you may mark the working of this quality of mind, in the commencement of her Christian course. "In conformity with this part of her character, her plan was, in any new resolution which involved the exercise of self-denial, to contend with the most difficult part of the undertaking first; after which, she used to say, she found the remaining sacrifices comparatively easy to be submitted to. On this principle, having resolved to desist from going to the theatre, about the time her play of 'Percy' was revived, she determined to make that the immediate occasion for carrying her new resolution into practice. Mrs. Siddons was then at the height of her fame, and was to act the part of the heroine of the tragedy, a character which she was said to exhibit with remarkable success, and Hannah More was in the midst of a brilliant circle of friends and admirers, who all attended the representation; but here she was determined to make her first stand against this particular temptation, and break the spell of the enchantment, while standing in the centre of the magic circle."

Another anecdote will show the same principle brought into exercise on a very different occasion. "As her limited income began to be sensibly diminished at one time, by her travelling expenses, she determined to perform her journey in stage

coaches ; and in order to overcome at once every obstacle that pride might interpose, she resolved to pay a visit to a nobleman (on which she was about to set out), in one of those vehicles which, as there was a public road through the park, set her down at the door of the mansion. She has more than once described her conflicting sensations, when his lordship, proceeding through a line of servants in rich liveries, came to meet her out of her conveyance, at that time much less used than at present by persons of high respectability. Thus it was the policy of this able tactician to commence her operations by a decisive blow, whereby the main strength of the opposing force was at once broken and dispersed, and her victory made easy and secure.” *

This is an important point to be borne in mind. After you have marked out for yourselves a certain course of action, and when you are thoroughly convinced of its importance, act immediately upon your conviction ; the first time you thus perform your part with decision and firmness, you may feel some diffidence ; but you will certainly be repaid by the consciousness of having done your duty.

It is well observed, “In matters of great concern, and which must be done, there is no surer argument

* Life of Hannah More.

of a weak mind than irresolution : to be undetermined where the case is so plain and the necessity so urgent ; to be always intending to live a new life, but never to find time to set about it ; this is as if a man should put off eating and drinking, and sleeping, from one day and night to another, till he is starved and destroyed.”

Perhaps some of my readers are ready to despair at the work put before them. You have been accustomed to depend on the will of your companions for excitement to action, and you feel so unaccustomed to it, that you shrink from encountering such responsibility. But to be a useful member of society, you must not continue thus to depend upon others.

It is not calculable what may be accomplished in everything in life by moderate beginnings and judicious perseverance. You do not yet know what you can achieve with regard to decision of character, till you have made the attempt ; and unless you do so, I can give you no hope of attaining the earnest character.

Let us for one moment inquire the source of Hannah More’s decision. Was it the whim of the moment ? the passing fancy ? No ! it was in pursuance of the great object of life ; she had been led by God’s goodness to see the folly of a life of pleasure : she had counted her cost, and was

decided to give up all worldly amusements, to lead a life of self-denial; and in accordance with this determination did she act. You will be enabled to pursue the same course, from the moment when you decide to lead the Christian life.

We are told of the philanthropist, Howard, that “the energy of his determination was so great that, if instead of being habitual it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermittent, it had an equability of manner, which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of anything like turbulence or agitation. The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation and commencing them in action was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive, after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity, was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings towards the main object.”*

The author of the essay from which the above is an extract was equally with the subject of his encomium a man of action. “No one,” an early friend remarks, “was better qualified to write on

* Foster’s Essays.

decision of character. It was from early life the habitual characteristic of his mind. He formed his purposes, and then proceeded to execute them, nothing wavering." These great characters, my beloved readers, were alike led on by the same urgent motive. Oh, seek to exhibit similar consistency and earnestness, the same prompt determination when your way is plain before you !

This decision of character is not inconsistent with the humility and retiredness which I should desire to see in you, for it is only where religious principle is concerned that I urge you to its exercise. Under the influence of love or fear towards those around you, your actions may appear right, because you are under their restraint ; but what I seek for you is, that you should acquire the power to decide aright, *to be guided by principle* under the many temptations by which you are surrounded.

I have heard that in the ancient catacombs, a clue or thread is given to the traveller, by means of which he is enabled to find his way through the interminable labyrinths, and to know where he may set his steps with safety and decision. Should his lamp expire, still may he press on with eager feet, if he retain but his hold of his guiding thread. Thankful should I be, my dear readers, if you would allow me to place one in your hands, to

enable you to know how to act, and where to direct your way, through the wilderness of this world. I have spoken of it before, and at the risk of being tedious, I again seek to place it in your grasp. Let me then bring before you this important truth ;—at the same moment that you are led to determine to live to the glory of God, and to make that your single aim, you take possession of your guiding clue, and with it you become a decided character.

In seeking to become an earnest character, there are certain golden rules with respect to time, which must become thoroughly interwoven with your nature.

I doubt not but you have some acquaintance with that most dangerous enemy, Procrastination ; he is well called the thief of time, for he has often stolen from the sons of men the best of the fleeting hours of life. Determine here, with Sir Fowell Buxton, “to conquer or die.” Parley not with your enemy, but at once, where your duty is plain before you, pursue it. “Clear off arrears of neglected duty ; and once the disheartening accumulations of the past are overtaken, let not that mountain of difficulty rise again. Prefer duty to diversion, and cultivate that athletic frame of soul which rejoices in abundant occupation, and you will soon find the sweetness of that repose which follows

finished work, and the zest of that recreation, in which no delinquent feeling mingles, and on which no neglected duty frowns.”*

Sir Walter Scott’s advice to a friend who had just obtained an important post is so applicable to my present subject that I must give it to you. “ You must beware of stumbling over a propensity which easily besets you, from not having your time fully occupied; I mean what the women very expressively call ‘dawdling.’ Your motto must be *Hoc age*. Do instantly, whatever is to be done, and take the hours of recreation after business, and never before it.

“ When a regiment is under march, the rear is often thrown into confusion, because the front do not move steadily and without interruption. It is the same thing with business. If that which is first in hand is not instantly, steadily, and regularly dispatched, other things accumulate behind, till affairs begin to press all at once, and no human brain can stand the confusion. Pray mind this ; it is a habit of mind which is very apt to beset men of intellect and talent, especially when their time is not regularly filled up, and is left at their own arrangement. But it is like the ivy round the oak, and ends by limiting, if it does not destroy, the power of manly and necessary exertion. I must

* Hamilton.

love a man so well to whom I offer such a word of advice, that I will not apologize for it, but expect to hear you are become as regular as a Dutch clock, hours, quarters, minutes, all marked and appropriated. This is a great cast in life, and must be played with skill and caution."

The author of "Life in Earnest" gives four expedients by which we may make the most of time. The first he mentions is *economy*, that is, collecting the scattered fragments of time ; this he calls "Gleaning up its golden dust—those raspings and parings of precious duration, those leavings of days and remnants of hours which so many sweep out of existence."

Perhaps few are aware, unless they are among those who thus redeem time, of the extreme value of these smaller portions of our "life's short day." I have known some persons who have acquired a language in the intervals of time that others were wasting without a thought ; and it is recorded of Dr. Burney, that he made himself master of both the French and Italian languages, during the short journeys he was called to make when giving his instructions as a professor of music.

The second expedient mentioned by Hamilton is *punctuality*. Of the importance of this, few persons are unaware, and yet how many are satisfied to come short of its requirements ! To be a few

minutes too late for any important appointment, or to fulfil some onerous duty, has often occasioned distress and sorrow, afterwards irremediable.

Method, is the third expedient, and is one of the most important things for you to cultivate, if you hope for success in your studies, or in your path through life.

As I shall have occasion again to refer to these subjects in connexion with their bearing upon your studies, I shall at present only mention the fourth requisite, which is *promptitude* as opposed to procrastination. This is a quality essentially belonging to an earnest person, and upon your cultivation of it will materially depend your decision of character. To act *at once* when our duty calls us forth, is sometimes difficult, but necessary; and it is not only in undertakings of magnitude that you are to exercise promptitude, it is important you should bring it to bear upon all parts of your daily life.

It is astonishing how difficulties vanish before the earnest character. Our own King Alfred is a bright example of what may be accomplished under the most unfavourable circumstances: living in what are emphatically called the dark ages, his eagerness to avail himself of every opportunity for mental progression, led him to use all possible means to bring around him the learned and good.

He sent persons into distant countries to find out, and bring to him, men distinguished for their classical attainments and other acquirements. The society of these men was his greatest delight ; “By day and night,” says Turner, “whenever he could create leisure to listen, they recited to him the books he commanded ; he was never without one of them near him ; and by this indefatigable application, though he could not himself understand the learned languages as yet, he obtained a general knowledge of all that books contained.” But the Saxon king’s love for science is not the most pleasing feature in his character. There is every reason to believe, from the literary remains which have descended to us, that his powers of mind were truly devoted to the service of God.

To what, I would ask you, may we trace the source of the elevation of mind thus displayed by Alfred ? Undoubtedly to the intense earnestness which characterized his mind, enabling him to overcome difficulties, a tithe part of which would have discouraged any ordinary person. Can any circumstances under which you may now be placed, be equally disadvantageous to those under which this noble-minded man fought his way to knowledge and wisdom ? Most assuredly not, for you live in an age when the means for mental progression are within the grasp of all. It is in too many cases

the earnest desire, the decided will to improve which is wanting. Let it not be so with you!

You will have, perhaps, heard the name mentioned of Elizabeth Carter, the translator of Epictetus—she is another example of an earnest student. Her father gave her, with the rest of his family, a classical education. Such, however, was the apparent slowness of Elizabeth to learn, that his patience was quite worn out, and he urged her often to give up the effort to become a scholar. We are told that “her perseverance and resolution were more than a match for both her own want of ready apprehension and her father’s discouragement. She had been accustomed to hear from her infancy that learning was the noblest of all things, except only piety and virtue ; and she was determined that learned she would be, let the labour be what it might. Whether she had to struggle with slowness of memory as well as of apprehension, we are not informed ; but it is probable that she had—the two defects are naturally connected, and often go together ; and nature has also provided the same kind of compensation for both. What it has taken a long time to apprehend in the first instance, or to get by heart, is likely to be thoroughly understood, or not easily forgotten : the labour that has been employed upon it works it into the substance of the mind, or impresses it in indelible characters, like

those chiselled in the hard porphyry. The more the resistance at first, the more the retention afterwards."

It is thus, my dear young friends, that if you are enabled to acquire true earnestness of character, all difficulties will be overcome. Think not that, because you are deficient in its requisites, you will never attain to it. Let me recal to your memory the words already quoted of Sir Fowell Buxton : "I speedily passed from one species of character to another. I found those things which were difficult and almost impossible to my idleness, easy enough to my industry." Be assured that to you, as to others, the path of honourable success is open, if you will but now begin to grapple with the difficulties in your way. I have read that the thirst of the native Irish is so great for knowledge that their children, though having neither book, pen, nor slate, have acquired the first elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic ; and how was this accomplished ? "Their place of meeting was no other than a grave-yard. The long flat stones with their inscriptions were used instead of books, while a bit of chalk, and the grave-stones together, served for all the rest." Will not this example, given you by the poor Irish children, of the difficulties to be overcome by perseverance, encourage you to go and do likewise ? or will you sink back

into a state of mental inertia or careless indifference, leaving the many superior advantages you undoubtedly possess unimproved? Let it not be so, I beseech you, my dear young friends.

But while giving you the above hints for the formation of an earnest character, I feel it necessary, before concluding this chapter, again to recur to the three great essentials, viz.: The conviction of the great end of existence; and earnest prayer for the assistance of the Holy Spirit to fulfil that end; ever remembering that it is only through the all-atoning merits of Jesus Christ that our prayers will be heard. These vital truths are placed before us in every page of revelation, and many an earnest, humble seeker has there been guided, by the Spirit of Truth, to a clear perception of the great end of life, and has been enabled to witness a good confession before God and man. Bear ever in mind, my beloved readers, that unless you make these three principles the foundation upon which your structure is to be raised, you must fail in its erection. We see the truth of this illustrated in the lives of many men of genius, who, for want of it, have grievously missed their aim. But turning to the records of humble life, there we shall find many, whose names may now be cast out as evil by the thoughtless multitude, but who, in another

world, will be among those who will shine as the stars in the firmament of heaven.

An interesting example of the earnest character in a comparatively humble position in life, is to be found in a record of the labours of Sarah Martin, of Great Yarmouth, in Norfolk. It will be profitable for us to trace, in her case, the source of her Christian devotedness. In her early life she was accustomed to devote all her hours of relaxation to reading, but she speaks of herself as at this time living without God, dead in sin, and so anxious to avoid whatever might bring her Creator to her thoughts that she put two Bibles away in a secret place that she might not see them. In her nineteenth year she heard a sermon which powerfully impressed her, and led her to feel some desire to attain, at least, religious knowledge. With this view, she began to read her Bible, formally, it is true; but mark, my beloved young friends, the way in which God honours his appointed means for the salvation of guilty man; while reading a portion of His blessed word, light was poured in upon her mind, and the plan of salvation through a crucified Saviour was made known to her. Her language respecting this period was, "There, seeing salvation, not in its commencement only, but from first to last, to be entirely of grace, I was made

free : and, looking upon a once crucified, but now glorified Saviour, with no more power of my own than the praying thief had upon the cross, I also found peace. The high assurance that Christ was mine, and with Him ‘all things,’ has never been withdrawn ; but in all I have been called to resist, or conquer, or endure, or suffer, it has been a light from God, not to be obscured, an ocean of comfort from the Rock of my salvation.”

She now began to study her Bible with fresh diligence, and to commit much of its contents to memory. “Thus,” she says, “in my sense of perfect destitution, I obtained knowledge from the Eternal Source : there was guidance imparted from on high, with clear satisfaction at the moment, and strong hope for the future, which years since then I have ever found advanced and confirmed.” Her anxious desire now was to find out a path for usefulness, and her first efforts were made in a Sunday-school. This she calls the first gracious favour conferred upon her. She afterwards was led to visit the workhouse, where her visits were much prized by the poor inmates ; but her peculiar mission and sphere of usefulness were soon made known, and opened to her. She had heard of the neglected state of the prisoners in the gaol, and was deeply impressed with their unhappy condition ; she obtained permission to read the Scriptures to

them, and soon gave up one day from her usual employment (dress-making) to enable her not only to read, but to teach reading and writing.

She then began to see the advantage further employment would be to the prisoners, and through her exertions this was supplied to them. The book of accounts connected with this part of her self-denying employment, is called, "Employment for the Destitute." Her labours became more and more delightful to her, and she was led earnestly to desire to give up her whole time to them. In 1838 she began to do this, her whole income, or means of support, being derived from the interest of between two and three hundred pounds. Let us now, my dear young friends, see the Christian faith and exalted views with which she commenced this surrender of all her time, talents, and influence to the service of her God. "God was my Master, and would not forsake his servant. He was my Father, and could not forget his child. I had counted the cost, and my mind was made up. If, whilst imparting truth to others, I became exposed to temporal want, the privation, so momentary to an individual, would not admit of comparison with following the Lord, in thus administering to others. Supported with these views, I advanced, still meeting increased disclosures of the Divine goodness; and it ought to be named, that others

may trust in God, for *there is no want to them that fear Him.*" Her instructions to the prisoners were principally at this time sound scriptural knowledge, reading and writing, giving them also portions of Scripture to commit to memory. In 1841, having been informed that a testimonial of approval in money was to be presented to her by the gentlemen of the corporation, she opposed it, and prevented its being brought forward. A deep sense of the value of her labours was felt by so many, that it was at last decided, without her consent, that twelve pounds a-year should be given her. One of the gentlemen saying to her, "The business is out of your hands ; if we permit you to visit the prison, you must submit to our terms." She was requested, in the latter years of her life, to draw up an outline of the plans she had pursued, to encourage others in the same course ; she concludes it in these words, which have so strong a bearing upon the subject of Christian devotedness, that I cannot omit them :—"Individual responsibility before God, and the Divine command, 'Love one another,' invest all that lies before every individual, when called to think, and act, and speak, with the importance of eternity ; whilst every Christian, in the path marked out by the wisdom of God's providence, whether in public or seclusion, will ever exhibit, by their lovely

effects, the same grand and influential principles ; for when a believing sinner is found looking unto Jesus, the heart is new, and gratitude delights in his commandments. In this simple account, in the absence of all human sufficiency on my part, whether of money or influence or experience, it is plain that God alone inclined my heart, instructed me by his Word, and carried me forward in hope and peace. Hence arises the boundless encouragement which it presents to others ; for the most humble individual, in any department of the providence of God, may build on the promises as firm as eternity : ‘ Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.’ And when life below is closing, and the happy departure is at hand, when the grateful heart looks back to the first moment of having seen the cross, it will declare, with praise and thankfulness, ‘ In following my adorable Redeemer, the blessing of him who was ready to perish came upon me.’ ”

But a faint idea of the labours of this earnest Christian character can be formed from the slight sketch I have been able to give you of her devotedness ; but will you not, my beloved young friends, take to your own hearts the lessons conveyed to us by this lovely exhibition of true earnestness ?

Is it not encouraging to you to find that it is not the possession of extraordinary talent, fortune, or

station which is necessary for your attainment of this character? It matters not what your circumstances or position may be; sure am I, that if you take your Bible for your guide, and act according to its holy precepts, you are certain of success. It was this which was the source of Sarah Martin's distinguished usefulness, and the same supply of strength and wisdom is open to you—the same motive for action, viz., the love of Christ in dying for you.

I have sought, in a former part of this chapter, to give you some estimate of the difficulties you must overcome before you can possess a truly earnest character: I acknowledge that they are great, but at the same time I would affectionately remind you, that in the hour of weakness you have a never-failing resource—Almighty wisdom and power, heavenly guidance, are ever at hand as you journey onward. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." To you, in the character of an earnest seeker, are these and many other precious promises addressed. Seek then by prayer to make them your own. I have urged you to a life of exertion, but ever bear on your minds the truth, that "prayer without exertion is presumption, and exertion without prayer atheism." Accustom yourself to ask God's guidance and blessing upon all you think, say, or do. Let the prayer of good

Bishop Kenn be often on your lips, and its sentiment be ever in your heart :—

“ Direct, control, suggest this day,
What I design, or do, or say,
That all my powers, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.”

When a child, I was introduced to an old book, which has ever since continued a great favourite with me. Quarle's Emblems, is the one to which I allude; and it consisted of a series of pictures or emblems, representing the course of the Christian life. Appropriate poetry accompanied each emblem. One of the latter represented a child learning to walk ; the lines prefixed were as follows :—

“ Great All in All, that art my rest, my home,
My way is tedious and my steps are slow ;
Reach forth Thy helpful hand, or bid me come ;
I am Thy child. Oh ! teach Thy child to go :
Conjoin Thy sweet command to my desire,
And I will venture, though I fall or tire.”

This well represents the entire dependance, my dear readers, you must place upon Divine help. “ Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe,” must ever be your prayer and your confidence. Our Saviour's address to his disciples was, “ Without me ye can do nothing,” and the declaration of his faithful servant, who had experienced that help, was, “ I can do all things, through Christ that

strengtheneth me." The truth of this precious promise and of its fulfilment has been realized by God's servants in all ages of the world. You may well say, "Who is sufficient for these things? How can I ever be enabled thus to glorify God? I feel a desire to be an earnest Christian character, to serve God in my day and generation, but when I look forward at what I might be called upon to do, if I thus lay myself out for usefulness, I shrink back, overwhelmed with the conviction of my utter weakness." My beloved young friends, cherish carefully this desire, act upon it. Consider your position and its capabilities as to influence, money, time, and other talents; offer all you possess to the service of your God; ask for his guidance; seek for supplies of wisdom and strength; soon your work will be placed before you, and whether it consists in visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, or providing for the afflicted, you will find all you need bestowed upon you. Would you know the spirit in which you should seek for these supplies, let me again take you to the record of the humble prison visitor: and while you mark her earnest supplications for grace, seek for the same devoted faithfulness, the same single eye; thus will the same blessedness be yours, both here and hereafter.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord."—Psalm xxxvii. 5. What an infinite supply of help and

comfort for my soul is implied in this exhortation ! Lord, I have already, by Thy grace, committed my way unto Thee. Thou hast bidden me to follow Thee, but it is on the waves. Assure my poor weak heart that the arms of everlasting love are round about me. I hear Thy voice—distinctly hear and acknowledge it. But there are other voices which would seem to speak to me for Thee, and they distress and perplex me. Elevate my inward man more above all else, that, having no eye but for Thy glory, no ear but for Thy counsel, and no fear but that of sinning against Thee, I may be free."

" 'And He shall bring it to pass,' v. 5. Lord, it is enough ! perfect will that work be. I am called to act by others, and with others, to an end, which seems to be a right one. In the highest sense let me act alone with Thee. There is much of obscurity in the path. I do not know how to proceed by an inferior light, and hence resort to Thee, to Thee, blessed Spirit of Truth ! To Thee, my precious Redeemer ! To Thee, my reconciled Father ! If the work proposed to me be not good in Thy sight, let it cease."

" Help me, blessed Redeemer, whilst I labour in Thy name and in Thy cause, to feel much assurance in the wonderful fact that Thou art working with me, in me, and by me. Let me be strong in the Lord. I beseech Thee, elevate my soul by Thy truth ; unfold to the eye of my soul

much of Thy character, Thy attributes, and purposes, that I may feel the firm ground on which I stand, and not be moved by aught which meets me. Thou art not seen by mortal sight. Let me constantly realize Thy spiritual presence; let me acknowledge this privilege by asking Thee habitually what I am to do, and by following Thee in love, educate me by Thy Spirit and Thy Word. Thou, O Jesus! art my wisdom; instruct me, give me a just discernment of what is truth, and a preference to it as strong as life."

"‘God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love.’ (Heb. vi. 10.) Surely this should be enough to satisfy, to encourage, and carry me forward in a line of stedfast obedience to God, and of active exertion in his service, for the sending forth of truth, the putting down of iniquity, and the conversion of souls. However insignificant my work and labour may seem to human judgment, avails nothing; I act according to a higher standard, and a perfect law. *My Master looks at the principle—love.*”*

* Extracts from Sarah Martin’s Scripture Place Book for daily use.—These are evidently the unpremeditated effusions of her heart, possibly recorded hastily in the few leisure moments of her active life. Her plan was to select a few parallel texts of Scripture, on which she made some brief comments.—From a brief Sketch of the Life of Sarah Martin; with Extracts from her Writings and Prison Journals. Published by the Tract Society.

CHAPTER IV.

OBJECTS OF STUDY—THE BIBLE THE MOST IMPORTANT—ALL HISTORY ILLUSTRATES THE BIBLE—HISTORICAL STUDIES—NATURAL PHILOSOPHY—MIND—LANGUAGE—DIVISION OF TIME—COMPANIONSHIP IN STUDY.

"O books! ye monuments of mind, concrete wisdom of the wisest ;
Sweet solaces of daily life; proofs and results of immortality ;
Trees yielding all fruits, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations ;
Groves of knowledge, where all may eat, nor fear a flaming sword ;
Gentle comrades, kind advisers ; friends, comforts, treasures ;
Helps, governments, diversities of tongues, who can weigh your worth ?
To walk no longer with the just, to be driven from the porch of science ;
To bid a long adieu to those intimate ones, poets, philosophers, and teachers ;
To see no record of the sympathies which bind thee in communion with the good ;
To be thrust from the feet of Him, who spake as never man spake ;
To have no avenue to heaven but the dim aisle of superstition ;
To live an Esquimaux, in lethargy ; to die as the Mohawk, in ignorance :
O what were life, but a blank ? What were death but a terror ?
What were man but a burden to himself ? What were mind, but misery ?
Yea, let another Omar burn the full library of knowledge, And the broad world may perish in the flames offered on the ashes of wisdom ? "

Proverbial Philosophy.

CHAPTER IV.

I HAVE sought, in the preceding chapters, to place before you some hints for the formation of an earnest character, and to show what is to be its foundation. I would now endeavour to point out the different objects of study to be carried on for the furtherance of your great work. These may appear various, but to the Christian student they all form parts of a whole, and radiate to one centre.

The devoted servant of God feels that he is "bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and desires to glorify God in his body and spirit, which are his." With this view he seeks to cultivate to the utmost every talent bestowed upon him, and strives with earnest watchfulness to embrace every opportunity of so doing. Deeply anxious to fulfil his duty to his fellow-man, and casting a wishful eye on the vast fields of labour around him, he sees that Divine Providence has placed him in a world where he may be the instrument of important good or evil to his fellow-creatures, and he endeavours to form a correct

estimate of every means by which he can obtain a large and extended influence for good. His ever-wakeful life enables him to secure each opportunity as it passes, of adding to his intellectual resources ; and while others are frittering away the precious hours of their short probation on earth, he is jealous of every moment that is not actively employed in laying in materials for present or future usefulness.

An eminent example of this earnest spirit was seen in the college course of M'Cheyne, to whom I have before alluded. We are told that, during the first years of his residence at the University, " his studies did not absorb his whole attention ; but no sooner was the change in his soul begun, than his studies shared in the results. A deeper sense of responsibility led him to occupy his talents for the service of Him who bestowed them. There have been few who, along with a devotedness of spirit that sought to be ever directed and engaged in the Lord's work, have nevertheless retained such continued and undecaying esteem for the advantages of study. While attending the usual literary and philosophical classes, he found time to turn his attention to geology and natural history ; and often, in his days of most successful preaching, when next to his own soul his parish and his flock were his only care, he has been known to express

a regret that he had not laid up in former days more stores of useful knowledge, for he found himself able to use the jewels of the Egyptians in the service of Christ. His previous studies would sometimes flash into his mind some happy illustration of Divine truth, at the very moment when he was most solemnly applying the glorious Gospel to the most ignorant and vile. He wrote to a young student, in 1840 :—‘ Do get on with your studies ; remember, you are now forming the character of your future ministry, in great measure, if God spare you. If you acquire slovenly or sleepy habits of study now, you will never get the better of it. Do everything in earnest, if it is worth doing, then do it with all your might. Above all, keep much in the presence of God. Never see the face of man, till you have seen his face who is our life, our all. Pray for others, pray for your teachers and fellow-students.’ ”

I have given you the above extract to show you how entire is the devotion of every power and faculty to the service of God, when once his love is shed abroad in the heart. It will not be unprofitable for us to turn to other instances.

The biographer of Legh Richmond observes,— “How painful is the discovery, when we see a person endowed with the finer qualifications of the mind, and the most interesting sensibilities of the

heart, wasting on unprofitable objects the power which, if rightly directed, might render their possessors the instrument of extensive usefulness and good. We seem to behold a beautiful and imposing structure, but it is not occupied by the rightful owner. The lord of the mansion is absent, and a stranger has usurped his place. We turn with disappointment from the contemplation, nor can we withhold the prayer, that ere long the fatal illusion may cease, and the chain of the captive be broken. In Mr. Richmond, every qualification became consecrated to religion. His imagination, taste, affections, and endowments received an impulse which directed all their energies to the glory of God, and to useful and profitable purposes."

In the devoted Martyn, were the same grand principles carried out, and we read that his mathematical acquirements were to him invaluable, inasmuch as they gave him that habit of patient and persevering study, which was sanctified in the application of his powers to the highest ends and purposes. Nor is this confined to the Christian minister. Whatever may be the position or circumstances of God's servants, they will exhibit a similar devotion of all their powers to the service of their great Master. Hear Wilberforce reviewing his past life, and alluding to the period

when he was led to give his heart to God :—“ My religion taught me the duty of devoting all my faculties and powers as a debt of gratitude to my reconciled Father in Christ Jesus, as well as of reasonable service to my Creator, Preserver, and continual Benefactor. And I was to labour more abundantly than the men of this world, who looked only to gain or glory for their recompence. ‘ For what do ye more than others ? ’ was our Saviour’s language to his disciples. You know but too well how sadly empty I then was ; how utterly destitute of the habits, no less than of the knowledge I ought to have possessed. My business, therefore, manifestly was, to employ as diligently as I could in study as much as possible of my recesses from parliament.”

Of Hannah More we are told that “ from the moment she was led to a decided Christian profession, she began to dedicate her powerful talents to the more immediate service of God, and the benefit of his creatures, and made her first direct advance in the walk of a Christian moralist ; that walk in which she afterwards proceeded, with her mind stayed ‘ upon Him who holdeth up the goings of his people in the way of his commandments.’ All her doings, little and great, from this epoch of her life, in which her time and her talents were consecrated to the highest service, were stamped with

a Divine impress, that sufficiently denoted to whom they belonged, and to what they were directed."

The subject upon which we are now about to enter is one of considerable difficulty, and boundless expanse. Solomon has said, "Of making books there is no end," and in the present day, we may apply this with double emphasis. The difficulty with young persons is to make a proper selection from the vast mass presented to them. It will, then, be my object in this chapter, to direct you, my dear young readers, to those studies which will be most worthy of your attention. It has been said, that "All distinguished men have been given to the habit of constant reading; and that no genius, no power of inventing and creating thoughts can ever supply a deficiency in this respect. To have the mind vigorous, you must refresh it and strengthen it, by a continued contact with the mighty dead who have gone away, but left their imperishable thoughts behind them."* A taste for reading of a solid and instructive kind, is one of those things which I should most seek for those dear to me, for I am assured that possessing this, they will have not only a resource against *ennui* and its attendant evils; but, if well directed, they will hold in their grasp one of the most important keys to mental progression.

* Dale's "Todd's Student's Guide."

The poet Southey thus writes, of the pleasure which his literary treasures ever afforded him : “ Having no library within reach, I live upon my own stores, which are, however, more ample, perhaps, than were ever before possessed by one whose whole estate was in his inkstand :—

“ My days among the dead are past ;
 Around me I behold,
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old—
 My never-failing friends are they,
 With whom I converse every day.

With them I take delight in weal,
 And seek relief in woe ;
 And while I understand and feel
 How much to them I owe,
 My cheeks have often been bedew'd
 With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead ; with them
 I live in long-past years ;
 Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
 Partake their hopes and fears ;
 And from their lessons seek and find
 Instruction, with a humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead, anon
 My place with them will be,
 And I with them shall travel on,
 Through all futurity.
 Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
 That will not perish in the dust.”

Before commencing our review of the objects of study, let me ask you, my dear young friends, what is the end you propose to yourselves from any educational advantages which may fall to your lot? Is it to shine in the eyes of your friends or acquaintances as a proficient in certain accomplishments? Is your aim to eclipse others by the brilliancy of your mental acquirements? Or is it the one great end of existence that is before you, viz., *the glory of God*? Is it this that makes you so untiring in your application to study—so anxious for mental progression? I have urged the necessity of this motive for action before; but you must not be surprised if I often again refer to it. It is my deep anxiety for your welfare which makes me do so, and as I would write under a deep feeling of the responsibility which belongs to me, so I now intreat you to make this, and no other, the foundation of your superstructure.

Put far from you the idea that your education is merely ornamental. I fear there are too many young people who consider it in this light. Be not of their number; rise to a higher view of your present position and its responsibilities.

An acute observer has remarked, “The system of female education, as it now stands, aims only at embellishing a few years of life, which are in themselves so full of pleasure and happiness, that they

hardly need it; and then leaves the rest of existence a miserable prey to vacancy and idle insignificance. The real object of education is to give children resources that will endure as long as life endures; habits that time will ameliorate, not destroy; occupations that will render sickness tolerable, life more dignified and useful, and death less terrible."

It is deeply important, my beloved readers, that I should show you the possibility of uniting an ardent desire to glorify God, with a determination to improve to the utmost every talent committed unto you. My anxiety for you is that, in the highest sense of the word, you should be Christian students, living a life of devotedness to your Saviour, and consecrating all you have and are to his service. I have placed before you the spirit with which a M'Cheyne, a Martyn, a Wilberforce, and other kindred spirits, cultivated their natural endowments. You know their subsequent career, you have heard of their faith and labours. Will you not also so run that you may attain unto the same spirit of devotedness, the same blessed influence for good upon all around you?

Truly has it been remarked, that "Literary education is so far from being a substitute for a moral one, that, on the other hand, it demands that a higher moral power should be exerted, in order to

steady and direct the progress of the human vessel."

I should hesitate to urge upon you the intellectual pursuits I consider so valuable and necessary, did I not give you credit for a spirit of Christian earnestness, which will lead you to pursue all your studies as in the fear of God. Many are the fatal instances of young persons, highly gifted, thirsting for knowledge, who, for want of this one great principle, have fallen victims to scepticism and infidelity. "The noblest impulses, not directed by established principles, may lead to imprudence and ruin, and thus defeat their own end."

I would give then to you, my dear young friends, the same rule for your studies which was given by a Christian parent to her children, many years ago; and which was to this effect : "*Literary pursuits are good or bad in their effects, as they make us relish the Word of God the more or less, after we have concluded them.*"

Bearing this ever in mind, and keeping in view the great mark at which you aim, your studies will be so far from injuring your spirituality, that they will be so many means of raising you to a greater capacity for the enjoyment and knowledge of God. Seeking the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit on all your employments, you will have your hearts ever attuned to praise and adoration.

It may not be unnecessary for me to warn you against the fears of some truly good people, who view with timidity the advances made in the present day in learning and science. The traveller ascending a lofty mountain finds that at every step his field of vision is enlarged, and he is able to trace and understand in a more complete degree the bearing of one part of the landscape to another. Perchance, should his position be sufficiently elevated, he will find, that that which appeared to him but an insignificant mountain streamlet becomes at last a noble river, the source of health and happiness to many a distant land. So is it ever with the earnest student, each progressive step places him in a better position for viewing the different relations of one part of science with another.

We daily see the opposite exemplified in the narrow and contracted views of the unprogressive members of society. From the low position they contentedly take in intellectual attainments, they have no opportunity of remarking the weighty bearing of one important branch of science or study with another, and condemn as useless that of which, from their low position, they are incapable of forming a right opinion.

Far different was it with Wilberforce, and others of his class :—

“ A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
 Who never saw the sword he could not wield ;
 Who, when occasion justified its use,
 Had wit, as bright as ready, to produce :
 Could draw from records of an earlier age,
 Or from philosophy’s enlightened page,
 His rich material, and regale the ear
 With strains, it was a luxury to hear.” *

* “ His eloquence was of the highest order—it was persuasive and pathetic in an eminent degree ; but it was occasionally bold and impassioned ; animated with the inspiration which deep feeling alone can breathe into spoken thought ; chastened by a pure taste, varied by extensive information, enriched by classical allusion ; sometimes elevated by the more sublime topics of Holy Writ—the thoughts and the spirit—

“ ‘ That touch’d Isaiah’s hallow’d lips with fire.’

Few passages can be cited in the oratory of modern times of a more electrical effect than the singularly felicitous and striking allusion to Mr. Pitt’s resisting the torrent of Jacobin principles :—‘ He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague was stayed.’

“ The singular kindness, the extreme gentleness of his disposition, wholly free from gall, from vanity, or any selfish feeling, kept him from indulging in any of the vituperative branches of rhetoric ; but a memorable instance showed that it was anything rather than the want of power which held him off from the use of the weapons so often in almost all other men’s hands.

“ When a well-known popular Member thought fit to designate him repeatedly and very irregularly as the ‘ Honourable and religious gentleman,’ not because he was ashamed of the cross he gloried in, but because he felt indignant at any one in the British Senate deeming piety a matter of

I would ask those who object to the acquirement of knowledge, if a great portion of the extensive usefulness of such men as the above may not be traced to the fact of their being essentially, in every sense of the word, progressive characters.

Dr. Davey has said, “The gratification of the love of knowledge is delightful to every refined mind ; but a much higher motive is offered for indulging in it, when that knowledge is felt to be practical power ; and when that power may be applied to lessen the miseries or increase the comforts of our fellow-creatures.” It was the enlarged views of Wilberforce with relation to his fellow-creatures that led him to exertions which were blessed by God to the amelioration of the condition of many thousands of his fellow-men. Invariably will you find that men who are thus honoured by God in the performance of some great work, have been earnest and diligent seekers for knowledge.

imputation, he poured out a strain of sarcasm, which none who heard it can ever forget.

“A common friend of the parties having remarked to Sir Samuel Romilly, beside whom he sat, that this greatly out-matched Pitt himself, the great master of sarcasm, the reply of that great man and just observer was worthy to be remarked :—‘Yes,’ said he, ‘it is the most striking thing I almost ever heard ; but I look upon it as a more singular proof of Wilberforce’s virtue than of his genius, for who but he ever was possessed of such a formidable weapon, and never used it ?’”—*Lord Brougham.*

In urging you, my dear young friends, to the same course, I do but seek to enlarge your sphere of usefulness, to enable you to take a comprehensive view of the means by which you may fulfil to the uttermost your appointed *mission* on earth.

It would be, perhaps, well if those persons who oppose study from a mistaken idea of its value, could be carried back to earlier ages, that they might realize the fearful consequences of a state of intellectual darkness.

Even the unenlightened Heathen had juster views in this respect than those who would thus place a barrier to mental progression, and obstruct the enjoyment and right employment of one of man's noblest possessions.

Those who assign so small a value to mental progression are assuredly not aware of the important bearing it has upon the happiness of their fellow-creatures and the glory of God. It would be a painful task were I to attempt to bring before you the many deeds of gross cruelty and injustice which have been committed solely from an ignorance of the laws according to which the economy of nature is regulated. Witchcraft alone has been the occasion of many judicial murders. In an age immediately preceding our own, if a poor infirm creature was afflicted with insanity, she was often pronounced to be a witch ; and "judges, lawyers,

ministers of religion, nobles, and persons of all ranks," would give their sanction to her trial and murder. It is said that upon this accusation 30,000 persons perished by the Inquisition ; and in Scotland so great was the zeal against witchcraft, that, we are told, more deranged old women were condemned for this imaginary crime than in any other country. So late as 1722, a poor woman was burnt for witchcraft.

Judicial astrology was another absurd and unfounded belief, which often led to most serious consequences. Superstition, with her train of imaginary terrors, exercised the strongest sway over the minds of millions. The phenomena of nature were gazed at with apprehension and dread.

If a person of more than ordinary acquirements struck out some new discovery, or brought forward a valuable idea, he was branded as a magician. Thus we read of one philosopher being suspected of having dealings with the devil, and of a physician being taken by the Inquisition, because he unexpectedly cured a patient. The explosions which took place in mines were attributed to demons. Thunder and meteors were ascribed to the devil.

It has been well observed—"While a man whose mind is enlightened by true science perceives through all nature the most striking evidences of benevolent design, the superstitious man, on the contrary, con-

templates the sky, the air, the waters, and the earth as filled with malicious beings, ever ready to haunt him with terror, or to plot his destruction."

But it is not only from superstition that we have to fear. The same cause—viz., ignorance of the powers and laws of nature, still continues to be the source of fatal accident and dangerous disease.

In our coal-mines most serious accidents are continually taking place, many of which arise from ignorance on the part of the miners. That this has been the case, is proved by the fact that in one mine, where alarming accidents had before frequently occurred, the proprietors took the precaution to educate the children at their own expense, and give them information respecting the kind of danger to which they would be liable in the course of their daily labour. The beneficial result was seen in the absence of any serious accident for the next twelve years.

Many of the injuries produced by lightning belong often to the same cause—viz., ignorance of its nature and of the laws which regulate its action. Another cause I may mention of frequent and severe accident arises from ignorance of the mechanical laws. Persons jumping from moving carriages, or rising up suddenly in boats, are often in the first instance themselves seriously injured, or in the second may occasion the loss of many beside

themselves. An acquaintance with the laws of compound motion, and the principle connected with the centre of gravity, would equally, in these cases, assist to avert such catastrophes.

My space will not allow me to give you more than these few and simple illustrations of the importance of a certain degree of scientific knowledge. Many other facts might be brought forward, such as the accidents which arise from ignorance of the effects of optical illusion, of the tendency of flame to ascend, of the air requisite to support it, &c.

But it is not only in relation to others that your studies will prove valuable, the effect on your own mind is of deep importance. The habits of concentrated thought, of steady attention, the varied and ever-new sources of delight which will be within your attainment, are calculated to exercise the most beneficial influences upon your character. In becoming an earnest student, you become fitted to fill any appointment of Providence, not only with benefit to others, but with satisfaction to yourself. Thus many persons entirely lose the happiness of being conscious of comparative fitness for any post of usefulness, because aiming not at the constant improvement of their faculties, they are left behind by the age in which they live, and can never rise to its requirements.

Let it not be thought for one moment that the

application to study which I recommend is to incapacitate you for fulfilling your relative duties. In the comprehensive view which I would have you take of your position and its responsibilities, these will occupy their proper place.

It has been justly remarked, “that the more there is of mind in our solitary employments, the more dignity there will be in the character. The allurements of dissipation have less power over such a character ; and mental cultivation will be found to add an exquisite zest to domestic and social intercourse. Cultivate, then, continues the same author, whatever tends to refine and adorn the mind ; it will make virtue engaging, and piety lovely ; but remember, that talents weighed against virtues, are as the very small dust of the balance. Let neither the pleasures of taste, nor the pursuit of knowledge, be for one moment placed in competition with the fulfilment of active duties ; those duties which are perpetually arising from the sacred ties of family and kindred.” These undoubtedly are to occupy the first place, and to the earnest Christian present a lovely and attractive sphere of action.

Should any of you, my dear readers, be conscious of having pursued study to the omission of any important duty, I would say, Stop at once in such a course, and rest not until, by diligent self-exami-

nation, prayer, and recourse to your never-failing guide, the Word of God, you have ascertained wherein you have failed.

But your studies are not only to bear a relation to others, and to your own happiness, you must ever remember, that one of the highest exercises of the reason bestowed upon us is to trace the Creator in his works. This employment will open to you a vast field of delightful and profitable study; and if you seek ever to prosecute it, in entire subserviency to Christian principle, you need not fear that it should prove injurious to you. The example of some of our greatest philosophers shows how practicable it is to unite the two.

Without some knowledge of the stupendous truths of astronomy, of the laws by which the great Creator governs his universe, I cannot conceive that adequate views can be formed of the attributes of the Divine Being. His revealed will itself invites us to the contemplation of this exalted subject: we are told that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." "Come and see the works of the Lord," is the exhortation of the Psalmist; and filled with adoring wonder and praise, he is led to exclaim, "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which

thou hast ordained ; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him ! ”

We are informed, that “the end proposed by the excellent Lord Collingwood, in the scientific education of his daughters was, that they might have fixed ideas of the nature of that Being, who could be the author of such a world.”

Abercrombie remarks, “that they who have made the highest advances in true science, will be the first to confess how limited their faculties are, and how small a part they can comprehend of the ways of the Almighty Creator. They will be the first to acknowledge that the highest acquirement of human wisdom is to advance to that line, which is its legitimate boundary ; and there, contemplating the wondrous field which lies beyond it, to bend in humble adoration before a wisdom which it cannot fathom, and a power which it cannot comprehend.” If, my dear young friends, you thus, with suitable humility, approach these glorious subjects, sure am I that you will find their consideration blessed to your souls.

A bright example of science, thus pursued, was seen in the Christian physician, Dr. Hope. We are told, “that he was an impassioned lover of science, indefatigable in the pursuit of truth, highly gifted by nature, and master of information, various,

versatile, and always at command ; the abiding sway of religion hallowed every acquirement, and lit up every advance in the realm of knowledge ; ‘Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?’ was the governing question of his daily life.”

I ask you not, my beloved readers, to do that which is impossible ; I bring before you these examples, to show you what may be done if you commence your labour in a right spirit. Before placing before you, in a more tangible form, the particular divisions of study, I would again intreat, yea, urge you to remember, that it is possible to glorify God in every employment ; and that if with a single eye you now enter upon the course marked out for you as a Christian student, a boundless expanse of noble pleasures, of the highest enjoyment of intellect, lies before you. All the powers of your mind may be engaged in your pursuit of knowledge ; and then, proceeding, ever in humble dependance upon Divine Wisdom, a mental progression will commence, to which we can assign no limits, for the great object and end of all your studies is to know God, the Infinite ! the Unchanging ! the Eternal !

Let me encourage you in the words of Sir Fowell Buxton : “ Labour unactuated by selfish consideration, and solely fixing its eye on the goal of duty, and steadfastly determined to reach it, is, I believe, never defeated :—

" His way once clear, he forward shot outright,
Not turned aside by danger or delight."

" This spirit—high objects—and, what is ten times better than either, a mind uninfected by vanity—no eye to self—these, together, will just accomplish everything, except impossibilities."

We will now, my dear young friends, take a brief survey of different branches of study which are worthy of your attention. You will remember that all I profess to do, in entering upon this important subject, is to give you a few hints. The limits of my little work will preclude my doing more than this, and my desire will be to bring before you a few of the essential objects of your notice.

Biblical study must occupy the first place in your plan. Among the subordinate ones, which I do not perhaps mention in their relative value, will be history, in all its branches ; natural philosophy ; the science of mind ; language ; physical geography. I shall consider each of these subjects separately, seeking to give you as correct an idea as is in my power of the proper manner of pursuing them with advantage.

Do not be alarmed at the comprehensiveness of the plan I would place before you. The great mistake with young persons is taking a part,

without bearing in mind its connexion with the whole.

A favourite author gives the following view of the objects of study: "Let us then seek solid information in history, which makes us acquainted with our forefathers;—philosophy, which displays the wondrous works of infinite power, wisdom and goodness;—geography, which is conversant with the abodes, habitudes, and relations of men;—astronomy, which carries us to distant worlds and colonies from heaven;—and, above all, in theology, which leads us even to the throne of God, and displays his glory; which presents us with a copy of his secret counsels, and the determinations of his wisdom respecting men; which unfolds the amazing scene of human redemption, and enables us to behold the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. This is knowledge rational, excelling, beneficial and immortal."

I would also remind you that it is for your advantage in every respect, that you make your plan as comprehensive as is possible: avoid confusion, and do not attempt too much; but, on the other hand, I should hesitate to check you in your desire for the attainment of any particular branch of knowledge, for many are the instances which have come under my own eye, of information thus acquired being of important service to the student in after-

years. In the present day, when fortune is more than ever precarious, you cannot better protect yourselves from her changes, than by laying in a capital of thought, upon which, in God's providence, you may be called to draw largely in future years. Many interesting anecdotes could be related to show how often the youthful pursuit of some particular study is brought to bear upon the comfort and happiness of an individual, or perchance of a whole family.

Let me beseech you, my dear readers, to lay it down as your first rule in coming to study, that your Bible shall be made the *one* book: remember, it is this alone which can make you wise unto salvation, and you must daily draw from its precious pages precept and promise, for your daily walk. An excellent author observes, "With what a mixture of fear, reverence, and holy joy should we open the Bible, the book of truth and happiness! God's heart opened to man; and yet the whole and every part of it secreted from Him, and hid under an impenetrable veil, till he opens his heart to God." It is thus that you must come to this blessed volume, pleading the promises given to the true seeker. Rest not satisfied until you feel that these are fulfilling to you, and that you rise from its perusal with a heart prepared and strengthened from the source of heavenly wisdom.

It is important that you should not only study its different parts carefully, but that you seek to have a correct idea of the whole. Take example by the course pursued by M'Cheyne; we are told that "his desire to grow in acquaintance with Scripture was very intense, and both Old and New Testament were his regular study. He loved to range over the wide revelation of God. 'He would be a sorry student of this world,' said he to a friend, 'who should for ever confine his gaze to the fruitful fields and well-watered gardens of this cultivated earth. He could have no true idea of what the world was, unless he had stood upon the rocks of our mountains, and seen the black mines and mosses of our barren land ; unless he had paced the quarter-deck, when the vessel was out of sight of land, and seen the waste of waters without any shore upon the horizon. Just so, he would be a sorry student of the Bible, who would not know all that God has inspired ; who would not examine into the most barren chapters to collect the good for which they were intended ; who would not strive to understand all the bloody battles which are chronicled, that he might find 'bread out of the water, and honey out of the lion.'"

With a view to your obtaining a comprehensive and enlarged idea of the Holy Scriptures, and that you may derive from the sacred pages all the

benefit intended by the divine Author, I shall give you a few simple rules, the result of the experience and observation of good men.

Devote the commencement of each day's study to the Word of God, and let your first use of it be purely a spiritual one. Strive to draw from its mine of heavenly wisdom directions for the day's responsibilities and perplexities. "Show me the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my eyes to Thee." Endeavour to realize the presence of God, and entreat His blessing upon all you think, say, and do. Remembering, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," let your prayer be that you may be guided in all things. In whatever you engage, depend on divine help,—"Prosper thou the work of my hands." Would that I could engage you, my beloved young friends, thus to bring all your cares and anxieties to your Heavenly Father : to take his Word as your guide and rule of conduct :—"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word. Thy testimonies are my delight, and my counsellors. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments ; for therein do I delight. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. O how love I thy law ! it is my meditation all the day. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. I am thy

servant ; give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies. The entrance of thy words giveth light ; it giveth understanding to the simple. Let thy hand help me, for I have chosen thy precepts." Such was the spirit with which the Psalmist delighted to make mention of the law of his God, and you must seek to enter into the same if you would enjoy the like grace.

Another most important practice is to commit large portions of the Holy Bible to memory. For this purpose choose the devotional parts, and let each day see progress made in this essential duty. The Prophecies, Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles, indeed every part of the Word of God, offer a fruitful field to your labours. It is related of the early Christians that they committed whole books of the Bible to memory ; and you should strive to follow their blessed example. Encourage those around you to do the same, and let those portions you have already acquired be retained in your memory by frequent repetition. You know not what a rich store of wisdom and consolation you are laying up for a future time.* Many who in

* An affecting instance of the consolation derived from the holy Scripture, is given us by Cowper. In his early life, he was in a public school, and " my chief affliction," he says, " consisted in my being singled out from all the other boys, by a lad of about fifteen years of age, as a proper object upon whom he might let loose the cruelty of his temper. One

youth have thus stored their minds with the precious Word of God, have found it a constant source of comfort in a time of sorrow on a bed of languishing.

Associated with the happy remembrances of my childhood, is one of being taken to see an aged Christian, who was remarkable, during a long affliction, for her rejoicing and happy state. She had lost her eyesight, through a most painful visitation, but her mind and memory were filled with portions of Scripture, and her delight, as she lay on her dying bed, was, day after day, to repeat the Psalms and other parts of the Word of God, which she had acquired in her days of health and strength. Not only will it be for your own spiritual good that you should thus make your Bible your own, but your future powers of usefulness will be greatly increased. To have a treasury of wisdom ever within your reach, will be

day, as I was sitting alone upon a bench in the school, melancholy, and almost ready to weep at the recollection of what I had already suffered, and expecting at the same time my tormentor every moment, these words of the Psalmist came into my mind, ‘I will not be afraid of what man can do unto me.’ I applied this to my own case, with a degree of trust and confidence in God, that would have been no disgrace to a much more experienced Christian. Instantly I perceived in myself a briskness of spirit and a cheerfulness which I had never before experienced, and took several paces up and down the room with joyful alacrity.”

to be ever prepared to administer counsel to those who need it. You will be armed with one essential part of the spiritual armour described by the Apostle,—“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

There is one subject connected with the holy Word of God, which I feel obliged to bring before you, because it is one upon which many young persons err, and indeed commit grievous sin. If you would wish, my dear readers, to experience the blessing of the Most High upon your study of the Scriptures, you must approach its sacred pages with awe and reverence. Remember, it is the revealed word and will of the living God, the author of your existence, upon whom you depend for all things, and before whom you will one day stand to be judged. Can it be that any of God’s creatures can be so thoughtless and wicked as ever to speak lightly of his word, or turn those pure oracles of truth into jest or mockery?

An excellent author remarks, “It is of the greatest importance that we should resist the temptations, frequently so strong, of annexing a familiar, facetious, or irreverent idea to a scriptural usage, a scriptural expression, a scripture text, or a scripture name. Nor should we hold ourselves

guiltless, though we have been misled by mere negligence or want of reflection. Every person of good taste will avoid reading a parody or a travestie of a beautiful poem, because the recollection of the degraded likeness will always obtrude itself upon our memories, when we wish to derive pleasure from the contemplation of the original. But how much more urgent is the duty by which we are bound to keep the pages of the Bible clear of any impression tending to diminish the blessing of habitual respect and reverence towards our Maker's laws!" If you are sensible of having ever indulged in this sinful jesting, at once make a determined effort to avoid it in future. No blessing *can* rest upon your studies, or upon any of your undertakings, while you permit yourself to treat the sacred volume with irreverence. I feel it difficult to speak with sufficient earnestness upon this point, for I have seen the ill effects of such conduct, habitually indulged in by young persons of fair promise. A blight has seemed to rest upon all their efforts for moral and religious improvement, and as long as the indulgence of the habit continued, every prospect of their attaining to anything approaching to an earnest character was set aside.

It will be interesting to glance at the estimate

formed of this sacred volume by some of our most illustrious and distinguished Christians.

Sir William Jones wrote the following sentence on the blank leaf of his Bible :—

“ I have carefully and regularly perused the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, *independently of its Divine origin*, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books in whatever language they may have been written.”

Of our own poet Collins, we read, that after having been for some years languishing under mental depression, he found peace and happiness in the Word of God. The only book he carried with him when travelling was an English Testament. A friend, anxious to know what companion a man of such elevated genius would choose, took it into his hand. “ I have but one book,” said Collins, “ but that is the best.”

This expression furnished the sculptor, Flaxman, with a subject for the monument of this poet. He is represented as in a calm reclining position, just recovering from an attack of frenzy, “ seeking refuge from his misfortunes in the consolations of the Gospel, while his lyre and one of the best of his poems lie neglected on the ground.” Above are two beautiful figures of Love and Pity, entwined

in each other's arms. The conclusion of the epitaph is as follows :—

“ Who join'd pure faith to strong poetic powers,
Who, in reviving reason's lucid hours,
Sought in one book his troubled mind to rest,
And rightly deemed the Word of God the best.”*

The words of the dying Brainerd, when a friend entered his room with a Bible in her hand, were : “ Oh, that dear book, that lovely book ! I shall soon see it opened ; the mysteries that are in it, and the mysteries of God's providence will be all unfolded.”

We are told of the holy Martyn, “ that of the Bible he could ever affirm, ‘ Thy word is very pure ; therefore Thy servant loveth it.’ The word of Christ dwelt richly in him in all wisdom. Large portions of it did he commit to memory, repeating them during his solitary walks, at those times when he was not expressly meditating on some *scriptural subject*, which was his general custom ; and so deep was his veneration for the Word of God, that when a suspicion arose in his mind, that any other book he might be studying was about to gain an undue influence over his affections, he *instantly* laid it aside, nor would he resume it till he had felt and realized the paramount excellence of the Divine oracles : he could not rest satisfied till all those

* Saturday Magazine.

lesser lights, which were beginning to dazzle him, had disappeared before the effulgence of the Scriptures."

Of M'Cheyne we read, that "three chapters of the Word was his usual morning portion. This he thought little enough, for he delighted exceedingly in the Scriptures; they were better to him than thousands of gold or silver. 'When you write,' said he to a friend, 'tell me the meaning of Scriptures.' To another, in expressing his value for the Word, he said, 'One gem from that ocean is worth all the pebbles of earthly streams.'"

Deeply important it is, my beloved young friends, that you should thus cherish an ardent love for the Word of God. It is this precious book which can alone shed the light of immortality over the dark valley of the shadow of death; and if you neglect it now, upon your dying bed will you feel the overwhelming need of its promises; all other studies will then sink into comparative insignificance.

Hear the estimate formed, under such circumstances, by one well known as an earnest and devoted Christian minister: "If God should restore me to health, I have determined to study nothing but the Bible. Literature is inimical to spirituality, if it be not kept under with a firm hand. A man ought to call in, from every quarter, whatever may assist him to understand, explain, and illustrate the

Bible; but there, in its light and life, is all that is good for man. All important truth is there, and I feel that no comfort enters sick curtains from any other quarter. My state is an admonition to young men. I have been too much occupied in preparing to live, and too little in living. I have read too much from curiosity and for mental gratification. I was literary when I should have been active. We trifle too much. Let us do something for God. The man of God is a man of feeling and activity. I feel, and would urge with all possible strength on others, that Jesus Christ is our all in all."

If such was the retrospect offered to one, who, in the eyes of his fellow-creatures, delighted in the study of the word of truth, what will be that presented to the view of many who entirely neglect it, or who only give it a secondary attention? If you have hitherto been satisfied thus to act, rest not in such a state of dangerous supineness and contented ignorance. To no part of the essentials to an earnest progressive character must you be so attentive as to this, viz., to grow in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

Do not be discouraged because you do not at first feel the delight you would wish in this study. Remember, it is in the use of means we may expect a blessing, and to no character are more encouraging promises addressed than to the Bible student. Soon

will you begin to experience their truth, if you search diligently in the Word of God. Whatever may be the high aspirations of your spirit, your thirst for intellectual and moral beauty, there will you find all you seek.

An affecting instance of this is related by Hannah More : "A short time before the death of Dr. Buchanan, he was describing to a friend the minute pains he had been taking with the proofs and revisions of the Syriac Testament, every page of which passed under his eye *five* times before it was finally sent to press. He said, 'he had expected beforehand that this process would have proved irksome to him ; but, now,' he added, 'every fresh perusal of the sacred page seemed to unveil new beauties.' Here he stopped and burst into tears. 'Do not be alarmed,' said he to his friend, as soon as he recovered himself, 'I could not suppress the emotion I felt as I recollect ed the delight it had pleased God to afford me in the reading of His Word.' "

I have spoken of your first study of the Bible being entirely a spiritual one. In connexion with this you must devote a certain time to acquiring a knowledge of Biblical literature, Jewish rites and ceremonies, Jewish history, the geography of Palestine, and the chronology of the Bible. The first hour of study is but a small portion to set aside

each day for this delightful occupation ; and, if regularly employed in the manner I have above hinted, you will soon find the result in your increasing knowledge and comprehension of the facts connected with Scripture. You will, perhaps, at first find it will tend much to enlarge your ideas of Biblical literature, if you so arrange its different parts that you one morning devote some time to Jewish history and chronology ; another to the geography of the Bible ; the rites and ceremonies of the Jews may occupy a third, and a consideration of Eastern customs a fourth. The divisions of the Bible, and a careful investigation into all the particulars connected with the peculiar circumstances under which each was written, may well be the subject of your next morning's study. Regularly pursuing this plan, you will find your knowledge of Scripture increasing on all sides. With your Bible in your hand, you will follow God's ancient people through their wanderings, from the time when the chosen family was called, to their dispersion. You will realize vividly the scenes through which they passed, as you trace in your map their journeyings. You will dwell with increasing interest upon each rite and ceremony of God's chosen people, which prefigures to you the one great sacrifice offered for the sins of the whole world ; and you will enter, in some degree, into the feeling with which the pious

Israelite viewed the services of the tabernacle and temple ; feelings well described by one of our Christian poets :—

“ Israel, in ancient days,
Not only had a view
Of Sinai in a blaze,
But learn’d the Gospel too :
The types and figures were a glass
In which they saw a Saviour’s face.

The Paschal sacrifice,
And blood-besprinkled door,
Seen with enlightened eyes,
And once applied with power,
Would teach the need of other blood,
To reconcile an angry God.

The lamb, the dove set forth
His perfect innocence,
Whose blood, of matchless worth,
Should be the soul’s defence :
For he who can for sin atone,
Must have no failings of his own.

The scape-goat on his head
The people’s trespass bore,
And to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more :
In Him our Surety seemed to say,
‘Behold, I bear your sins away !’

Dipt in his fellow’s blood,
The living bird went free,
The type, well understood,
Express’d the sinner’s plea ;
Describ’d a guilty soul enlarg’d,
And by a Saviour’s death discharg’d.

Jesus, I love to trace,
Throughout the sacred page,
The footsteps of Thy grace,
The same in every age :
Oh ! grant that I may faithful be,
To clearer light vouchsafed to me ! ”

An acquaintance with the customs of Eastern nations will add greatly to the force of certain scriptural expressions and allusions. Nor can you enter into the full beauty of many parts unless you are aware of the customs and manners peculiar to the pastoral life. It will be important, also, that you do not omit, in your Biblical studies, to devote some time to the evidences of the truths of our holy religion. It is well that each one should be able to give a reason of the hope that is in him, and you are arrived at an age when you may with great advantage give attention to this subject.

In no study is it more important than in that of Scripture that a comprehensive outline should be formed in the mind. By this I mean, that, although it is often desirable to take particular parts as the objects of our notice, yet our first aim should be to have a correct idea of the grand design manifested through all the sacred books. When we remember that these were written at different times, in different places, and that they extend through a period of 1600 years, we shall see, in the harmony which exists between them, a convincing proof of Divine origin.

"How many different books in the Bible," observes a pious author, "and yet how do they all show the same object, viz., to declare the one great truth, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners! The death of our blessed Saviour is the 'one great event which forms the key to the whole scheme of Gospel mercy.' It requires the study of a lifetime fully to comprehend its inestimable worth to our own souls, being the last and grandest revelation of God's will to man. Then the light of truth attained its zenith. It had been centuries in rising and throwing its twilight rays over an increasing surface; but the cross was its meridian altitude. Therefore, under the redeeming and unchangeable government of our Lord and Saviour, the world will hereafter move forward to its close."

One of the most important helps to your right study of the Bible will be, to make it its own expositor. This you will do by the aid of marginal references, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. xi. 13.)

Bishop Horsley remarks, "that the most illiterate Christian, studying in this way, and praying for divine illumination, will not only attain to all knowledge necessary for his salvation, but will become learned in everything relating to religion,

in such a degree that he will not be likely to be misled.” *

There are many subjects connected with the profitable reading of the Word of God, which I

* Were I not afraid of lengthening the subject of this little work too much, I should bring forward many instances of the blessed results of a prayerful, diligent use of the Word of God. I content myself with citing an extract from a speech made by the beloved Wilberforce, when attending a public meeting at Brighton. He had been visiting the dying bed of Mrs. Henry Thornton, and from thence he went to the meeting. “When he entered the room,” says an eye-witness, “he seemed so pale and fatigued, that his friends feared he would scarcely be able to speak. But he no sooner entered on his subject than his countenance was lighted up; he became animated and impressive. ‘Had it not been,’ he said, ‘for one painful circumstance, it was not my intention to have been present at this meeting to-day; for I have been compelled to curb the zeal which I always feel to attend on occasions like this, by making it a rule to myself to decline being present at such meetings, in places of which I am not a regular inhabitant, that I may not become too obvious and intrusive. But to-day I have broken this rule, for I am just come from a scene in which the value of the Book, which it is your object to disperse, is displayed as with a sunbeam. I dare not withhold such a testimony as it furnishes to the healing and victorious efficacy of the inspired volume. I am come from a chamber, in which a widowed mother, surrounded by her, soon to become, orphan family, is enabled to look the last evening calmly in the face, herself possessing a peace which even the waves of Jordan cannot ruffle, because it is the gift of God; her children, in some degree, enabled to

have not time to bring before you. My aim is to show you its deep importance, and to lead you to a

anticipate for her the hope of glory! It is a scene which must be witnessed, to produce its full effect upon the heart. A scene such as, if I had not myself witnessed, I could not have adequately imagined; a happiness felt in the moments of the deepest outward dejection and sorrow; an elevation above the evils and trials of this mortal life. Trials! did I call them? Triumphs! let me rather say, of the believer's faith! And, let me ask, is this consolation in affliction, this hope in death, anything peculiar to their particular circumstances or temper of mind—any family secret which they alone possess, and from which men in general are excluded? No, Sir, it is that which the blessed Word of God offers to all who will embrace it; and, therefore, how could I but come and congratulate you and this assembly on being permitted to be the honoured instruments of the Almighty in diffusing such a cordial as this to a dying world? How could I but rejoice in being allowed to join with you in endeavouring to circulate these imperishable blessings? It is true, indeed, some tears of mortality will fall when we see a friend descending into the dark valley of the shadow of death, and the mortal frame suffering its last agonies. "Jesus wept," and He will allow his people to weep also. He will pardon and pity the tears we shed from human infirmity. But, notwithstanding this natural sorrow, it is the blessed privilege of the work in which we are engaged, that whilst its end is glory to God in the highest, the way by which it conducts us is pleasantness and peace, and it gives us substantial victory over that last enemy, whom, sooner or later, we must all of us individually encounter. In the chamber of sickness, and from the bed of death, the soul, leaning on the word of her God, may meet that enemy without alarm, and calmly say,—"O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

prayerful and daily use of its sacred pages. There are many valuable works published, which might prove a great assistance, and to them I refer you. At the close of this little volume I hope to give you the names of several, any one of which would give you valuable help.

With regard to the study of history, I am well assured, from my own experience, that the plan I would now recommend to you will prove a never-failing source of interest and pleasure. To give you a few hints for this mode of historical research, I must bring before you a few leading ideas.

The most important division of history will be sacred and profane. With respect to extent, history is divided into universal and particular. In relation to time, general history is commonly divided into three parts;—ancient history, which commences with the creation and finishes 476 years after the Christian era, with the fall of the Western Empire. (This division I should perhaps tell you is arbitrary, and is by some prolonged to the reign of Charlemagne, in 800, including the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.) The history of the middle ages, which commences with the fall of the Western Empire, and ends with the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, including what are called the dark ages; and modern history,

which begins with that event and continues to the present day. This threefold division must be the groundwork of your plan. We will now proceed gradually to fill it up. Each of the divisions given above are important events, which changed the face of the political world. Those which mark the separation of ancient history from that of the middle ages are, first, the eruptions of the barbarians ; secondly, the destruction of the Western Empire ; thirdly, the foundation of modern states. The events which mark the separation of the history of the middle ages from modern history, are, first, the taking of Constantinople, and the establishment of the Turks in Europe, 1453 ; secondly, the discovery of America by Columbus, 1492 ; thirdly, the discovery made by Vasco de Gama, of the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, and through these two events a change in the general direction of commerce ; fourthly, the changes introduced into the art of war by the use of gunpowder.

I would here recommend to your use a little work on chronology (*Slater's Sententiæ*), which is invaluable for the clear ideas it contains. Belonging to it is a chart, which when used with the book will materially assist you. This chart is divided into fifty-eight spaces, each space representing a cen-

tury. The birth of our Saviour, which took place forty centuries after the creation, is represented by a bright radiance at that part. The importance of that event, rendering it a convenient point to compute from, we reckon upward from the birth of our Saviour to the creation, and the centuries since that event are computed downwards. The forty centuries which elapsed from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ are generally divided into five grand eras. The first, from the creation of the world to the founding of the kingdom of Assyria, is left *white* upon the chart; the second, or duration of the Assyrian monarchy, is coloured *pink*; the third, or duration of the Persian monarchy, is coloured *blue*; the fourth, or duration of the Grecian monarchy, is coloured *yellow*; the fifth, or Roman empire, is coloured *green*.

The progress of the Christian religion furnishes us with four important divisions of time, from the birth of Christ downwards.

The first, from the birth of Christ to the time when Constantine, the Roman Emperor, embraced the Christian faith, is coloured *red*. The second, from that present period to the time of the first Crusade (which includes what are called the dark ages), is coloured *black*. The third, from the time of the first Crusade to the Reformation, is coloured

orange. The fourth, from the Reformation, is coloured *violet*.*

The above divisions I have taken from the “*Sententiæ*,” because they will contribute still further towards the completion of your outline. If in your power, I should recommend you to purchase the chart and book. They are not expensive, and are most valuable helps.

Having so far formed your plan, and gained a general idea of the course of historic time, you may next decide where you will first begin to fill up. My advice would be, to commence at that part to which you feel most drawn by curiosity and inclination. Perhaps it will be well if I give you the following arbitrary divisions for the study of history taken from Pycroft:—

HISTORY	Modern	{ Of Great Britain, Of the Continent, Colonies, and of India, America.
	Ancient	{ Of Rome, Of Greece, Of the Egyptians, Persians, and other Ancient nations.

“History alone, therefore, gives a choice of six comprehensive departments of study. ‘Divide and conquer;’ that is, choose one and master it, and you will have accomplished, in point of time and labour, much more than a sixth part of the whole.”

* I give these, that those of my readers who do not possess the chart or book, may form one for themselves.

Whichever branch you decide on, your first step must be to “reconnoitre the general face of the country;” then, “to select one portion for a more searching and minute examination.”*

Pycroft says, “To strengthen your mental power, and to multiply your literary stores, so far as to be invincible at every point of so long a line, is not much more easy, and not at all more judicious, than to man the wall of China. Like a good general, be content to concentrate your forces ; to ‘divide’ off and ‘conquer,’ first one part and then another. You may be agreeably surprised by finding that the intermediate parts, when left by themselves, are less formidable than they appear, and readily give way as you become a more practised assailant.”

The Outline Histories, published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, are those which I should recommend you to purchase. Whichever branch of history you first decide to study, let your preliminary step be to commit the outline to memory, or to make yourself so thoroughly acquainted with its contents, that you have a clear idea of the whole ; you may then, if you feel so inclined, strengthen your outline by

* I owe to Mr. Pycroft’s interesting little work, “Course of English Reading,” many of the ideas on the study of history contained in this chapter.

reading Keightley's History, or any other in your possession, which is not too voluminous. Now decide upon which particular period you will concentrate your forces. I have given you an outline below of historic time,* from which you may select

* "General historical time. Ancient history comprising a period of 2,476 years, B.C. from 2000 to 555, comprising 1,455 years.—The power of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Medes. 2dly. Golden age of Egypt, and Phœnicia. Commencement of Grecian civilization, B.C., from 555 to 307, comprehending 248 years. The Persian monarchy. Golden age of Grecian science, rising power of Rome, B.C., from 307 to 30, comprising 277 years. Alexander's monarchy in separate states. Greece falls. Rome gains the sovereignty of the world, but forfeits her own freedom, B.C., 30 to 476 A.D., comprising 506 years. Golden period of the Roman monarchy to 180, A.D. The fall of Rome. The west European states originate in the great migration of nations. Total number of years in ancient history, 2,476 years.

"Modern history; comprising to 1842 a total period of 1,346 years. A.D. 1476 to 888, number of years, 412. The rise, grandeur, and division of the Frankish monarchy; threatening conquests of the Arabians. Commencement of the Papal power, A.D. 888 to 1215, comprising 327 years. Successful struggles against the German Emperors, together with the Crusades, complete the Papal power. Naval power and commerce of Venice and Genoa. Turks, A.D. 1215 to 1492, comprising 277 years. Decline of the Papal power. 100 years' contest between France and England. Knowledge diffused by the Italian republics. The Portuguese discoveries. The art of printing and the modern Greeks. Turks in Europe, A.D. 1492 to 1648, a period of only 156 years. Great geographical discoveries. Reformation. The Austro-Spanish preponderance in the West annihilated by the revo-

any leading idea which attracts your interest and curiosity. You may perhaps be led to choose the "Golden Age of Grecian Science."

lution in the Netherlands. The formation of the British navy, and the thirty years' war. Sweden, powerful in the North. Grandeur and decline of the Turkish empire in the East, A.D. 1648 to 1740, a period of ninety-two years. The preponderance of France under Louis XIV. destroyed by the Spanish succession war. The ascendancy of Sweden in the North annihilated by the northern war. Gradual diminution of the Turkish power. Rising influence of Russia in the north-east, 1740 to 1789, a period of fifty-nine years. Balance of power of the five principal states of Europe; England, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Seven years' war. North America independence. Partition of Poland. French revolution, 1799 to 1811, a period of twelve years. Consequences of the French revolution. System of prepotency. Napoleon's armies sway the continent of Europe; Britannia's fleets and colonies rule the ocean and engird the earth. The patriotic war in the Peninsula commences. Revolution in Spanish America, 1811 to 1820, a period of nine years. Triumphs of the British and allied armies in the Peninsula, and at Waterloo. Disastrous Russian campaign, followed by the rising of nations, and rapid annihilation of the Napoleonic ascendancy on the Continent. Pacifications of Paris and resumption of the principle of an equi-ponderance of power, 1820 to 1842, a period of twenty-two years. External amity among the principal powers of Europe, but, in many states, intestine ferment and vivid internal changes. Patriotic struggles of the Polish nation. The Spanish domination over southern and central America entirely ceases. Contraction of the Osmanic rule in the East. Total number of years in modern history, 1,366. Total number of years in ancient and modern history, 3,842."—*Bell's Historic Chart*.

Before commencing the subject of the best mode of pursuing historical studies, let us, for one moment, pause and inquire, What is history? Arnold calls it "The biography of a society; and simply biography, unless it finds in the persons who are its subject something of a common purpose, the accomplishment of which is the object of their common life. History is to this common life what biography is to the life of an individual. A nation has its inward life no less than an individual, and from this its outward life also is characterized."

Arnold proceeds to show what should be the object of the life of a nation:—"There should be some worthy end. This should be—the setting forth God's glory, by doing his appointed work. Perfection in outward life is the fruit of perfection in the life within us; and a nation's inner life consists in its *action* upon and within itself." "History contains no mean treasures; as being the biography of a nation, it partakes of the richness and variety of those elements which make up a nation's life. Whatever there is of greatness in the final cause of human thought and action, God's glory and man's perfection, that is the measure of the greatness of history. Whatever there is of variety and intense interest in human nature in its elevation, whether proud, as by nature, or sanctified by God's grace;—in its suffering, whether blessed

or unblessed, a martyrdom or a judgment—in all its strange reverses, in its varied adventures, in its yet more varied powers, its courage and its patience, its genius and its wisdom, its justice and its love—that, also, is the measure of the interest and variety of history."

We may also ask, what are the lessons we should seek to draw from history? They are many and most important. The necessity of a Divine revelation to impart the knowledge of God. "The world by wisdom knew not God." It shows us the universal fallen condition of man;—the superiority of the Christian system to all others;—the insufficiency of worldly greatness to give happiness;—that irreligion and wickedness are always connected with ruin. The throne is established by righteousness. "Righteousness exalteth a nation;"—and, lastly, when illustrated by prophecy, it leads us to consider the final extent and glorious reign of the Saviour in the hearts of his people. Soon will history be closed: time will be no more, and eternity shall terminate the scene.*

I would now direct your attention to the principles which you must ever keep in view while pursuing this study. Remember, that all events are under the control of one great Supreme Being; the final issue, then, can be known but by his

* History in all Ages.

revealed will. “ Divine instruction, therefore, is requisite to all proper understanding of human history; ”* and as the sacred volume is a sealed book to the unconverted, so neither the one nor the other can be comprehended but by those “ who surrender themselves to the guidance of the Spirit of God.”

A second important principle, which has been hitherto but little noticed in historical works, is, that “ Christ is the centre of universal history; without which centre the records of the world must ever present themselves as a mass of confusion. The infallible key of history is the recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ as its central point. The whole system of Divine government revolves around Him.”†

Remember, thirdly, that you ever bear in mind the intimate connexion between God’s government in the world and the events of history.

* Dr. Barth.

† If the history of man be no fortuitous series of changes, but a regular system of events, proceeding upon a Divine plan, then must the moment when God himself came personally into this world, in our nature, be regarded as the most eventful in human history. Everything that preceded it must have been designed as preparatory to the gathering in of this mighty deed of God, and everything subsequent to it must have been equally fore-ordained to the setting forth of its intent and application.”—*Dr. Barth.*

All these, whether they refer to the rise or fall of nations, the triumph of the conqueror, or the humiliation of the conquered, equally serve the purpose of the Most High, and assist in the development of the hidden counsels of Divine Wisdom. To the unenlightened mind, the history of the four great empires of antiquity are but facts of common interest ; but to the Christian student, who views their rise and fall in the light of revelation, they stand forward as preparing the way for the kingdom of Christ. Before the first had finished its destined course, the prophetic vision was given to Daniel, that at their fall the kingdom of the Saviour should be established.

Hear the very words in which he speaks of the kingdom of Christ, that kingdom which was to arise in the time of the fourth, or Roman Empire : —“In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people ; but it shall break into pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” Then, in the fulness of time, did the Desire of nations come. “Hitherto the great empires which successively prevailed had been of this world ; but now was set up in the earth a kingdom of God, a heavenly kingdom ; inward, invisible ; its essence, the communion of God’s children.”

Mark again, my beloved readers, that "*history is the record of the fulfilment of inspired prophecy.*" With your Bible in your hand, study the early ages of the world's history, and mark the clearness with which the prophetic Word of God illustrates it. Study fulfilled prophecy, if you still doubt the close connexion of the two, and there will you find how intimately they are blended.

In entering upon a course of historical study, your first aim must be to form in your own mind a clear idea of historic time. There are many valuable works which will prove of great assistance to you for this object; and you must endeavour to take in, at one view, the course of events from the beginning of time to the present day, with their principal divisions.

The great error with students of history is, that they do not sufficiently attend to the importance of a clear and definite outline for the foundation of their superstructure. I have been often struck with this, when conversing with girls who are considered to have finished their education. They can tell you, perhaps, the names and a slight portion of the contents of many voluminous books through which they have waded; but when you speak of the connexion of all parts of history, it is evident that, in exclusively devoting themselves to any particular period, they have done so without the

least consideration as to the bearing of that particular part upon the whole.

It has been well remarked, that “it is with history as with painting: ‘Fine painters tell their pupils, first draw a correct outline—let your anatomy be correct first; it is easy to fill in and colour afterwards.’ With an outline history you have the figure—the bones. Every one, according to his ability, may work out and bring into bolder relief and more substantial form any part that he pleases.” *

To obtain a clear idea of this interesting subject, you must muster all your forces. Books of reference will now be necessary, such as an Ancient Atlas, Dictionaries of Antiquities, Biography, Fine Arts, &c. It is this method of investigation which has been followed with advantage by many an earnest student, and which is far superior to the too usual plan of reading volume after volume, without seeking to become thoroughly acquainted with any one particular subject.

Burke’s opinion of the proper mode of study, though originally applied to other subjects, is here valuable.

“For my part, I am convinced that the method which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best; since, not

* Pycroft.

content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew ; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of investigation, and to direct him in those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable."

Dr. Arnold recommends the same plan ; and in his admirable Lectures on Modern History, thus speaks of the great advantage attending such a mode of study. " And here I cannot but congratulate ourselves in this place, on those habits of careful sifting and analysis which we either have, or ought to have, gained from our classical studies. Take any large work of a classical historian, and with what niceness of attention have we been accustomed to read it ! How many books have we consulted in illustration of its grammatical difficulties ! how have we studied our maps, to become familiar with its geography ! what various aids have we employed to throw light on its historical allusions, on every office or institution casually named ; on all points of military detail, the divisions of the army, the form of the camp, the nature of the weapons and engines used in battles or in sieges, or on all matters of private life, points of law, of domestic economy, of general usages and manners ! In this way we penetrate an ancient history by a thousand

passages ; we explore everything contained in it : if some points remain obscure, they stand apart from the rest—for that very reason distinctly remembered—the very page in which they occur is familiar to us. We are already trained, therefore, in the process of studying history thoroughly, and we have only to repeat for Philip de Comines, or any other writer on whom we may have fixed our choice, the very same method which we have been accustomed to employ with Herodotus and Thucydides.”

Do not be alarmed, my dear readers, at what I here propose to you, or think it beyond your power to follow the example of students such as Arnold addressed. Your time, powers, and accessible means of improvement, may, probably, be very limited, by circumstances over which you have no control ; all I urge you to do is, to make the most profitable use of those in your possession. It is my firm belief, that very few young persons are aware of the resources within their power, and how much they might do with regard to mental progression, would they but make the most of the advantages they undoubtedly possess. There are certain standard works with which almost every family library is furnished ; and many, I fear, allow these literary treasures contentedly to remain on their book-shelves, because they really do not

know how to use them in an interesting and profitable manner, and if they did, feel no inclination to do so.

I will now return to the golden period of Grecian civilization, which I have supposed to be the subject you first take up as an object for study. In commencing it you must not imagine that because it is ancient history, it bears no relation to the present period in which you live. If we look back, we see that "Greek philosophy, with its Pythagoras, its Plato, and its Aristotle, was the only intellectual leaven, that set in motion the inert mass of the dark middle ages. Greek *science* was the fore-runner of our Reformation. Grecian *mind* prevails still in our schools of learning, in our whole system of education, and has incalculable influence in forming the spirit of our age and our habits."*

Judge then, my dear readers, if a deep interest will not belong to the age you propose to contemplate. You will bring also to its investigation the same great principle to which I have so often adverted; and many are the lessons you may draw for your own benefit, while marking "the vain attempt to attain through philosophy those great results which the kingdom of Christ could alone supply." Having gained, from the resources in your possession, an outline of your picture, and

* Dr. Barth.

furnished yourself with a clear idea of the political condition and relation of Greece to other countries, you may devote yourself to the very pleasing employment of filling in.

“It was now that was made the decisive trial, how far the perfection of human talent and the height of earthly law would avail towards regenerating mankind.” Will you not feel an intense curiosity to know something of the master minds that were destined to act a part in this attempt?* A long list of illustrious men, philosophers, poets, orators, historians, architects, sculptors and painters, might I bring before you, each of whom contributed their quota to the glory of their country, and dying, left a name to descend to the most remote posterity.

We are told that within a period of a hundred

“490 to 431, Golden period of Grecian civilization, from the Persian to the Peloponnesian war (within this falls the age of Pericles, 444 to 429), a period in which Greece brought forth great men, in almost every department of human knowledge;—in tragedy, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides;—in comedy, Aristophanes;—in lyric poetry, Pindar;—in philosophy, Socrates;—in history, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon;—in medicine, Hippocrates;—in the plastic arts, Phidias, Polyclitus, Praxiteles;—in painting, Polygnotus, Zeuxis, Parrhasius;—in architecture, Ictinus, Callimachus, designers of the great buildings of Pericles; lastly, that music was much cultivated, appears from the building of the Odeum of Pericles, for the purpose of musical competition.”—*Oxford Tables of History*.

and sixty years, Greece was raised, by these her children, from comparative obscurity and barbarism, to the highest point of splendour and power. To obtain the information you desire respecting them, you must have recourse to your books of reference, and then arranging under proper heads the kind of knowledge you require, you will soon find your eager curiosity gratified. The philosophy of Greece, her laws, her fine arts, games, oracles, and the biography of each great man, will be alternately made the subject of your research; and by bringing to bear every possible help on any one point, you will ultimately be astonished at the result obtained.

Your pen must now be brought into requisition. To its use I attach the greatest importance. The information you collect from different sources must be arranged under different heads, and either carefully transcribed, or, if too long, abstracts formed. When reading any lengthened account it will be desirable to take notes. The only rule to be observed in doing this is to be careful that you seize the most important idea or fact; from these you may form your abstracts.

While studying this particular period, you will find an interest excited in the synchronistical history of other countries, and you will scarcely feel satisfied without turning a glance to their condition. You

will dwell with interest on the simplicity of Roman manners, as compared with the luxury of Athens. And, after reading of the travels of Plato and other philosophers and historians, you will wish to retrace their steps, and will find in the ancient wisdom of the Egyptian and other nations the reason of their wanderings.

I cannot imagine that you will rise from study thus pursued without feeling your desire for historical information considerably increased ; and the little light which you have thus obtained will give a vividness to that particular period, of which you will never lose sight ; it will also cast a gleam upon the past and future, which will materially assist you in your onward path.

I have brought Grecian history before you merely as an example ; but the plan must be pursued with all parts and branches of history. I should, perhaps, have before told you, that your Atlas must be always your companion. A clear knowledge of the relative position of each place will assist in the vivid conception I desire you should form of each event.

There are other methods of studying history which are, perhaps, equally valuable with the one I have above named, and I will try to bring one before you :—Assisted by a synchronistical table, such as the Oxford Chart, you will find it inte-

resting to study with the express view to bring before your mind the condition of the different countries of the world at any given period. For example, the period from 750 to 800 A.C. is one of exceeding interest.

You will find that in the darkest period of European history, when the sun of science was declining in our own continent, it arose in Asia. In the history of the Caliphat, you will see almost all that then remained of general literature and philosophy, for it was partly from the Arabs that Charlemagne caught his love for letters and learned men, and his anxiety to found learned institutions. Haroun el Rashid was the friend of Charlemagne, and we are told that his love for literature was so great, that he never built a mosque without attaching a school to it.

Turning to the north of Europe, you will find in the Sea Kings and Vikingr, "sovereigns who, with no wealth but their ships, no subjects but their crews, and no hope but their swords, swarmed upon the ocean, plundered every district they could approach, and for above two hundred years spread blood and misery over all the nations of Europe. Never to sleep under a smoky roof, nor to drink a cheerful cup over a hearth, were the boasts of these pirates, who regarded raw flesh and blood as a

delicacy, tears and mourning as unmanly, and to wrench the infant from its mother's breast, and to toss it from one to another on their lances, as a sport or exercise."

Here, again, your books of reference must be used, the architecture and luxury of the Arabians, the manners and customs of the different nations, will all help to give you a definite picture of the state of the world at that time.

I have found this plan a most interesting one to pursue; and if you have patience to commence with the earliest ages, passing slowly down the stream of time, forming, as you proceed, abstracts of each century, you will be richly rewarded in the information you acquire and the pleasure experienced. If after pursuing this plan for some time you feel that a change would be desirable, adopt the first plan I mentioned.

Pycroft observes, "that one of the leading principles on which you should choose a portion of history to be made a strong point for deep study, is—to be guided by your own taste and curiosity; for you will sail into the wide ocean of truth more rapidly with than against the current of your nature." And Johnson's advice is to the same effect.

Ecclesiastical history must occupy your very

serious attention, and the remarks I have made upon the manner of studying history equally apply to this as to any other of the grand divisions.*

A very common complaint with young persons is, that they cannot remember what they learn. This

* I shall give you a skeleton plan that you may not be without some clear idea to guide you:—

“First Period.—From the effusion of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, to the time of Constantine, A.D. 33 to A.D. 324, including the apostolic age. The increase of the Church under persecution. General persecutions under the heathen emperors. The constitution and state of the primitive Churches, and the practice of individual members.

“Second Period.—From the time of Constantine to Pope Gregory VII., A.D. 325 to A.D. 1073, inclusive. External condition of the Churches. Missionary characteristics of this period. The spiritual declension of the Church. The Mohammedan darkness. Continuation of Missionary exertions. Further declension of practical Christianity.

“Third Period.—From Pope Gregory VII. to the Reformation, A.D. 1073 to A.D. 1517. Extension of the Christian Church. Temporal afflictions of the Church. The Christian Church at its lowest degradation. The Waldenses. The Bohemian Brethren.

“Fourth Period.—From the Reformation to the present period, A.D. 1517 to A.D. 1835. The Reformation in Germany and Switzerland. The Reformation in England and Scotland. Attempts at Reformation in Italy and Spain. The Reformation in France and other countries. Continued opposition of Popery to the Protestant Church. Internal condition of the Protestant Church. Formation of the present Moravian Church. Missionary history of this period. Believers and Infidels. The present situation of the Christian Church.”—

Dr. Barth.

arises in great measure from the little connexion existing in their minds between the parts of a subject. Remember that one important feature in a well-regulated and cultivated mind, is a constant exercise of memory, "founded on the relations, analogies, and natural connexions of different subjects."

For historical dates I have found the little book before mentioned, Slater's "Sententiæ" very useful, and the system of artificial memory given in it, is so simple that a little child can find pleasure in its application. The dates given in it should not, however, be committed to memory without first making yourself well acquainted with each subject. I would advise you to write a small account of every date; this will impress it upon your memory, and give you many ideas upon historical events.

Other systems of artificial memory have been recommended, but the only one I like is that I have just named. The great key to memory on every subject, is having one grand and comprehensive outline, into which (in its appropriate niche) facts are introduced as you become acquainted with them.

I have spoken of charts of history. These are very valuable if they can be procured; but if not, do not despair, my dear readers, of making equal progress with those who have it in their power to

procure every help they may imagine necessary. Form tables of history for yourself. Divide a sheet of paper into centuries, place the leading events of the country, with whose history you are anxious to be acquainted, in each space; find out the eminent characters, the remarkable discoveries of each period. If you pursue this plan with each country separately, you may afterwards form synchronistical tables for your own use, by placing in one view, in different columns, the facts you have collected.

I have so great faith in self-culture, that though I might desire many helps for you which you may never possess, I shall scarcely regret the absence of them, if such a circumstance lead you to use your own mental resources, and to draw largely upon your store of youthful energy and perseverance. How many young persons, surrounded with every inducement to study, sink down into listless inactivity, contented to limit their knowledge of the treasures in their father's library to the outside binding; while others, with apparently no advantages, fight their way courageously onward, deterred by no difficulty in their path, discouraged by no obstacle!

I now turn to a subject of wide extent and possessing peculiar claims to your attention. An

excellent author has thus spoken of its importance:—“The works of the Lord are great, ‘sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.’ To look on the creation with an eye of interest and feeling, must be ever acceptable to the Creator. To trace out the several properties of his works, and to study with diligence and humility their laws, their uses and operations, is an employment worthy of the immortal mind of man, since it is one of those studies which we may reasonably hope will survive beyond the grave.—When we shall no longer see through a ‘glass darkly,’ what wonders of creation, spiritual as well as material, may unfold themselves to our view ! But if we pass through this world, as the slumberer does through the night, unconscious of what lies around us, how can we be assured that those excellent things will delight us in future, of which we had no perception in our preparatory state ?”

Here, as in your other studies, you must bear in mind, that that of which you perceive the beauty and fitness is but a slight intimation of the harmony and beauty of the whole, “where link unites with link, and all combines to form one unbroken chain, one grand and comprehensive system.”

Whether you soar with the astronomer into those fields of infinite space which are peopled by the discoveries of modern science, with innumerable

worlds, or watch, with the aid of the microscope, the motions of the myriads of animalculæ in a single drop of water, you will equally find infinite wisdom and goodness manifested. The marks of design surround you on every side, and you may well exclaim,—

“ Surrounded by thy power I stand ;
On every side I see thy hand ! ”

To a mind once awakened to these subjects of interest, all external objects bring their tribute of delight, and minister to mental progression. The subject, at first striking for its novelty, becomes doubly so when the perception is quickened to seize at each step some sublime truth in natural theology.

It is said, that when the great Galileo was questioned by the Inquisition, as to his faith in the existence of a God, he pointed to a straw on his dungeon floor, and replied, “ that from such an object alone he could with certainty infer the being of a supreme and intelligent Creator.”

To the devout Christian, the objects around him are a never-failing cause of praise. “ How wonderful,” exclaimed Wilberforce, taking up a nutmeg from the table, “ are the works of God, in enduing with such a scent a mere piece of dust ! ”

I would ask you, my dear young friends, to

strive to acquire this delight in the works of the great Creator. However various your tastes may be, there will be found something to interest each and all.* There have been some sincere but ill-judged persons who have decried these studies, as if the magnificent revelation of God's attributes in creation were at variance with his revealed word. I have before spoken upon this subject, and will only now remark, that the contemplation of his

* "Amongst the various means of superseding man with worthy and innocent indulgences, we are surprised that natural history has met with so little attention. As a source of gratification and amusement, taking it in its lowest aspect, we know nothing so exempt from all corrupting tendency. It seems to have the irresistible effect of abstracting the mind from all that is gross and sordid. The first simplicity is sustained by nothing so well as by natural history. Perhaps we should not be saying too much, if we said that the elements of a beautiful religion lay in this study, when its study is set about in a right manner.

"An ingenious naturalist was lecturing, a few years ago, at a watering-place, on certain curious preparations of the lower marine animals, which he had spent years in elaborating. Amongst the audience was a peer, who had spent a brilliant fortune in the follies which beset his class, and was now in much reduced circumstances, but who had naturally some good dispositions. This gentleman listened, and after its conclusion, lingered behind to examine the specimens, and converse with the lecturer. 'Oh,' he at last exclaimed, 'had I been taught a little of this science in my early days, from what might it have saved me!'"—*Chambers.*

Heavenly Father's works will agree with the tender and filial love of his adopted and happy child, and surely forms a fit subject for his investigation.—

“ Were every faltering tongue of man,
 Almighty Father! silent in thy praise,
 Thy works themselves would raise a general voice,
 E'en in the depth of solitary woods
 By human foot untrod—proclaim thy power,
 And to the choir celestial Thee resound,
 The Eternal cause, support and end of all !”

It is, I believe, a sacred duty, incumbent upon those who have it in their power, thus to study the Divinity in his works ; and a knowledge of the laws which govern animate and inanimate matter—of the wondrous design and skill evinced in the whole creation—will prepare us to answer the objections, which in this day are too frequently brought against revealed religion.

“ There are two books,” observes an excellent author, “ from which I collect my divinity ; the one written of God ; the other of his servant, Nature—that universal manuscript which He has expanded to the eyes of all. But I never so forget God as to adore the name of Nature ; the effects of Nature are the works of God, whose hand and instrument only she is, and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her, is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument. If we may do this with reason, then let our hammers rise up, and

boast that they built our houses, and let our pens receive the honour of our writing."

The universal book of Nature is then open to you, my dear readers; I would that it were in my power to present all, or even a part, of its wonders and its beauties to your view. I can but give you a few feeble hints, to show you the mutual dependance of the departments of knowledge, and then I must leave you to seek for yourselves in the fair fields which lie open before you.

The first arrangement of the constituent parts of the universe will be into the three classes, called the Three Kingdoms of Nature, or minerals, vegetables, and animals; the minute description of these is called Natural History.

With regard to the phenomena or changes going on around us, we find we may refer them to four distinct classes; viz., physical, chemical, vital, and mental. The simple expressions which describe them, are called general truths, or laws of nature; and as a body of knowledge they constitute what is called Natural Philosophy, in contradistinction to natural history, already described.

The general laws of Nature are then divided, as stated above, into the four classes of—first, physics, often called natural philosophy; secondly, chemistry; thirdly, life, commonly called physiology; and, fourthly, mind. These may be said to form

the pyramid of science, of which physics is the base.*

It has been said, "that the cultivation of every kind of knowledge is necessary for the full development of the faculties," and the studies of natural history and natural philosophy are amongst the most valuable for the attainment of this end. It would be difficult to particularize where so much of interest is associated with each part. I shall here give you the same rule as in the study of history—to begin upon that part in which you feel most curiosity—with no intention, however, of remaining there, but of ever pressing onward in progressive attainment.

In contemplating the material universe, there are three subjects to which I would particularly invite your attention. One is the sublime truths revealed to us by modern astronomy. How are our ideas enlarged and expanded when we consider the immense magnitudes, numbers, and distances, which are here presented to us ! truly may we cry, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ! Who can by searching find out God ? Who can find out the Almighty to perfection ? Who can utter the mighty operations of Jehovah ?

* For this arrangement I am principally indebted to Arnott's "Elements of Physics."

Who can show forth all his praise ? He has prepared his throne in the heavens, his kingdom ruleth over all ; He doth according to his will among the armies of heaven." "The host of heaven worshippeth Him ; all his works, in all places of his dominions, praise Him. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his government there shall be no end."

Such is the language of inspiration, of the revealed Word and will of this glorious Being ; and corresponding with these views of his wondrous power and might are the discoveries made through science of his attributes. "They demonstrate the unity of God, his wisdom and intelligence, his boundless benevolence, his Almighty power, and the magnificence of his empire !" Will you be satisfied, my beloved readers, without searching into these glorious truths ? Remember that the knowledge acquired here will undoubtedly be carried with us into a future state. Considering science, then, as no other than an investigation of the Divine perfections as displayed in the universe, we may believe that the views, which it here opens to us will not be lost, when we pass into eternity. One of the employments of the inhabitants of heaven is given to us in revelation, where they raise the song of praise :—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ! just and true

are thy ways, thou King of saints!" "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created;" these aspirations occupy the minds of saints on earth.

We are told of Wilberforce, that when speaking of Herschel's remark, "These are things which must be for ever hid from man," he broke out, "No, that they shall not; I shall know all these things. Oh, how low, at the best, are your wise men and philosophers! truly, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."*

* He notes in his pocket-book, "The importance of meditating more on God as the Creator and Governor of the universe. Eighty millions of fixed stars, each as large at least as our sun. Combine the considerations hence arising with the madness and guilt of sin, as setting up our will against that of God. Combine with it Christ's unspeakable mercy and love, and that of God in Christ." This subject he had been accustomed to notice in his family exhortations. "The discoveries of astronomy," he said, "instead of having an opposite effect, warm my heart. I think of eighty millions of stars, in one nebula, and two thousand nebulae, and I feel elevated and thankful to bear part in this magnificent creation —to be the child of Him who is the Governor of these boundless dominions." These thoughts often passed into meditations upon the moral attributes of God. "Retire into thy closet," is one of the last entries in his pocket-book, "and there let contemplation indulge her flights and expatiate." "I feel unspeakable pleasure," he tells a friend, "in the declarations so often reiterated in the Word of God, of the

Geology is another department of modern science, which brings before us wondrous proofs of the power and goodness of God. It is but recently that it can be said to have existed as a science, for its conclusions and discoveries are dependent on the advanced state of chemistry, zoology, botany, and mechanics. A great astronomer tells us, that "Geology, in the magnitude and sublimity of the objects of which it treats, undoubtedly ranks in the scale of the sciences next to astronomy." To those who are as yet unacquainted with the subjects of geological discovery, this assertion may appear incredible, but it is nevertheless true. The practical advantages of geology are also great. "The geologist can confer on mankind benefits of no mean order, can assist the farmer to fertilize the surface of the earth, so that two blades of grass shall grow where one grew before, and can impart system to the labours of the miner, so that no longer groping his way in the dark, he may prosecute with confidence and with an approach to certainty, those costly operations which are neces-

unvarying truth of the Supreme Being. To me there is something inexpressibly sublime in the assurance, that throughout the whole immeasurable extent of the all but infinite empire of God, truth always extends, and like a master-key, unlocks and opens all the mysteries, wisdom, and goodness, and mercy of the Divine dispensations."

sary in order to extract from the earth the treasures which have been there stored up for our use.

"Geology possesses this over most other sciences, that with discipline for the mind, it combines exercise for the body. The geologist breathes the purest air of heaven, amidst the loveliest and the sublimest scenery of nature, whilst exploring those mountain recesses, where her mysteries are best revealed. Geology has fields of research suited to every labourer, and to every capacity. On some of its investigations, the highest intellectual powers, and the greatest acquirements in abstract science may be brought to bear, while many of its problems may be solved by any one who has eyes, and will make use of them. If we visit the same cliff or the same quarry, daily, for years, we shall at every visit be rewarded with something new; and there are few districts barren in objects of geological interest, however deficient they may be in the beauties of picturesque scenery."*

It would occupy me long were I to enumerate to you the practical bearings of this interesting study. All I can do is to seek to excite an interest which may lead you to pursue it with advantage to yourself and others. You may, perhaps, hear some objections made to this science, but it will ever be by those who have not given it a proper considera-

* Magazine of Popular Science.

tion. To those who pursue it in a right spirit, it is the efficient auxiliary of religion. Its disciples may say—

“We not to explore the secrets, ask
Of His eternal empire, but the more
To magnify His works, the more we know.”

Geology, or the earth in its former condition, will not occupy your exclusive attention; a kindred science, Physical Geography, or the earth as it is, will prove of equal interest. This has, also, but recently been elevated to the dignity of taking its place among the list of sciences. Its continued neglect arises from the prejudice entertained by many persons to the name chosen. The knowledge of the proper meaning of the word physical, viz., natural, will cause this to vanish. The study of this branch of natural history will lead you to a contemplation of the general structure of the earth, its atmosphere, the living beings that belong to its surface, and the phenomena relating to the laws by which nature is governed.

Miss Zornlin remarks upon this science, that “It not only directs our attention to the more striking and wonderful, because more uncommon phenomena of the natural world, but leads its student to observe and to reflect, to derive subjects for thought and admiration from all that surrounds him; thus enhancing his pleasure, both in the

perusal of every description of the earth's surface, and in the contemplation of all the works of creation. Evident traces of beneficent design present themselves on every side ; the student himself may perceive them. The more he knows the more does he wish to know ; his spirit becomes athirst for knowledge. And it is well that it should be so, for he has entered on a vast and inexhaustible field, full of treasures, which those who seek shall find—hidden treasures of wondrous power and goodness ; and if these are pursued with a proper spirit, he will learn that the mind employed on that which is great, becomes itself greater." *

I ought, perhaps, before this, to have said some-

* "A general diffusion of knowledge, owing greatly to the increased commercial intercourse of nations, and, therefore, to the improvements in the physical departments of astronomy, navigation, &c., is changing everywhere the condition of man, and elevating the human character in all ranks of society. In remote times, the inhabitants of the earth were generally divided into small states or societies, which had few relations of amity among themselves, and whose thoughts and interests were confined very much within their own little territories and rude habits. In succeeding ages, men found themselves belonging to larger communities, as when the English heptarchy was united ; but still distant kingdoms and quarters of the world were of no interest to them, and were often unknown. Now, however, every one feels that he is a member of one vast civilized society, which covers the face of the earth ; and no part of the earth is indifferent to him. In

thing upon the great importance of turning your attention to the science of mind. This “investi-

England, for instance, a man of small fortune may cast his looks around him, and say with truth and exultation, ‘I am lodged in a house that affords me conveniences and comforts which, some centuries ago, even a king could not command. Ships are crossing the seas in every direction, to bring me what is useful to me, from all parts of the earth. In China, men are gathering the tea-leaf for me; in America, they are planting cotton for me; in the West India islands, they are preparing my sugar and my coffee; in Italy, they are feeding silk-worms for me; in Saxony, they are shearing sheep to make me clothing; at home, powerful steam-engines are spinning and weaving for me, and making cutlery for me, and pumping the mines, that minerals useful to me may be procured. Although my patrimony was small, I have post-coaches running day and night, on all the roads, to carry my correspondence; I have roads, and canals, and bridges, to bear the coal for my winter fire. Nay, I have protecting fleets and armies around my happy country, to secure my enjoyment and repose. Then I have editors and printers, who daily send me an account of what is going on throughout the world, and among all these people who serve me. And in a corner of my house I have books! the miracle of all my possessions, more wonderful than the Wishing Cap of the Arabian tales; for they transport me instantly, not only to all places, but to all times. By my books, I can conjure up before me, to vivid existence, all the great and good men of antiquity; and, for my individual satisfaction, I can make them act over again the most renowned of their exploits; the orators declaim for me; the historians recite; the poets sing; and, from the equator to the pole, or from the beginning of time until now, by my books, I can be where I please.’

“This picture is not overcharged, and might be much

gates the laws and relations of the processes of simple intellect, as perception, memory, imagination, and judgment; and the proper cultivation and regulation of these is the object of the practical art of intellectual education." It is not until the mind has made considerable advance in other studies that this assumes an interesting aspect; but as soon as the inner life becomes perceptible to the earnest student, then will he begin to analyze and examine into the mental processes he feels connected with it. The operations of the mind are also so intimately related to self-culture and mental progression, that to become acquainted with them will prove of the greatest value to you.

Clear ideas upon all subjects are invaluable, how much more those with which your mental improvement is so closely interwoven. The constant exercise of attention and association, as having a most important bearing upon memory, will be one of those things to which you must pay more than ordinary attention. One of the most common preventives to improvement in the young is the habit of listless inactivity, not so much of body as of mind; and where this is freely indulged, but little

extended; such being God's goodness and providence, that each individual of the civilized millions that cover the earth may have nearly the same enjoyments as if he were the single lord of all."—*Arnot's Physics*.

hope can be entertained of that person becoming ever a successful student.

It is well observed, “Abstraction in study is nothing more than the attention so completely occupied with the subject in hand, that the mind takes notice of nothing out of itself.” And this is a point at which I am most anxious you should aim: for to be able to concentrate the powers of the mind upon any given object, is to have obtained a most desirable faculty, and one which will be a constant source of satisfaction and advantage.

Abercrombie has given a clear and interesting view of the qualities and acquirements which constitute a well-regulated mind,* and I advise you, my dear readers, often to turn to it, and carefully examine if you possess its requisites. You will not at once attain to them, for the habits which belong to such a desirable state of mind will require careful and attentive cultivation.

Coleridge remarks, “that a reflective mind is not a flower that grows wild, or comes up of its own accord: and the difficulty is, indeed, greater than many who mistake quick recollection for thought are disposed to admit.” †

* See Appendix, A.

† “Reader! you have been bred in a land abounding with men, able in arts, learning, and knowledge manifold—this man in one, this in another; few in many, none in all. But

You must bring, therefore, to bear upon this important subject intense earnestness. Contemplate it with deep attention, and rejoice, while you feel within you a consciousness of intellectual life, that you have the light of revelation to guide you in your researches.

There are certain habits with regard to study which it will be also most desirable you should form.* We are creatures of habit, and, however disagreeable a custom may be at first, we soon become reconciled to it. Do not despair, then, of being able to continue, or to form any which may appear desirable for you, but act in this respect as Hannah More or as Buxton would have done, with determined and invincible energy.

Closely connected with mind, will be the audible signs of words, or of language. Our actions proceed from our thoughts ; to communicate these to others we must make use of words. Perhaps you have scarcely dwelt with sufficient attention upon

there is one art of which every man should be a master, the art of reflection. If you are not a thinking man, to what purpose are you a man at all ? In like manner, there is one knowledge which it is every man's duty and interest to acquire ; namely, self-knowledge ; or to what end was man alone, of all animals, endowed by the Creator with the faculty of self-consciousness ? ”—Coleridge.

* See Appendix, B.

the fact, that it is language operating as the means to the intellect of man, that has gradually changed the face of the world.

An eloquent writer upon this subject thus describes the wonders wrought by this medium of communication :—“ By language, fathers communicated their gathered experience and reflections to their children, and these to succeeding children, with new accumulations ; and when, after many generations, the precious store had grown, until simple memory could retain no more, the arts of writing, and then of printing, arose, making language visible and permanent, and enlarging ultimately the repositories of knowledge. Language thus, at the present moment of the world’s existence, may be said to bind the whole human race of uncounted millions into one gigantic rational being, whose memory reaches to the beginnings of written records, and retains, imperishably, the important events that have occurred ; whose judgment, analyzing the treasures of memory, has discovered many of the sublime and unchanging laws of nature, and has built on them all the arts of life, and, through them, piercing far into futurity, sees clearly into many of the events that are to come ; and whose eyes, and ears, and observant mind, at this moment, in every corner of the earth, are watching and recording new phenomena, for the purpose of still

better comprehending the magnificence and beautiful order of creation, and of more worthily adoring its beneficent Author."

It is to enter into these exalted subjects, to drink into the same spirit, to form a part of this mighty mind, that language is to be cultivated and acquired. Your own must be first made the object of your earnest study. After having attained a good grammatical knowledge of its construction, you must have recourse to the best authors; these will form your style, and by their careful study you will gradually acquire the power of expression. One of the greatest helps to this will be found in the use of the pen. The abstracts you form in history will be so many exercises in composition. It will be well for you, also, to make the latter a separate study, its importance demands this; and there are now published such excellent works upon this subject, that you will find no difficulty in improving or forming your style, if you are possessed of common industry.

With regard to the acquirement of other languages than your own, what will be your object in seeking to obtain a knowledge of them? Will it be the foolish vanity of being able to utter a few French, Italian, or German phrases, to gain the credit of being able to do that which you are unable to perform? I grieve to say, that I have known

such to be the motive in too many cases, but let it not be yours, my dear readers. Let your aim be, to grasp at fresh fields of thought, a larger circle of knowledge, and last, though by no means least, the power to express to your fellow-creatures the thoughts of your heart. Many are the opportunities for usefulness which will belong to you, if you can thus apply your acquisition of foreign languages.

Often does the poor wanderer from a distant land come to your door, wayworn and weary; the accents of his own native tongue, tuned by compassion to a softer key, may lead him to listen to truths which he would not hear from any other channel. In a foreign land you may also be enabled to seize opportunities for doing good, which must be lost, were it not for your knowledge of the language of the country.

Space will allow me to say but little upon the relative value of modern languages. French is important as forming a common bond of communication upon the Continent. Amongst its literature, I shall be able to name to you some historical and scientific works of interest. If you have leisure, I should strongly recommend also the study of the seelenvolle * German, on account of the many literary treasures inclosed within its circle.

* Full of soul.

Perhaps some one of my readers may say, "I have wished to study German, but I am far away from any master, and if I begin, I must trust to my own exertions." "Do so," I would answer—with your grammar, dictionary, and an easy book, you may make a beginning, and one too that will be an auspicious one. I have known more than one young lady residing in a country town, unable to procure masters, who made most respectable progress in French, German, and Italian, by her own exertions. One young friend, in particular, I could mention to you, who obtained a good knowledge of German, almost entirely by herself, the only assistance she had being a few hints from a kind friend, who was herself a learner. Circumstances afterwards brought my young friend into a neighbourhood where she was able to have a few lessons of a master, and she is now busily engaged in translating for one of the most popular publishers of the day. Such is but one instance of the force of energy and earnestness of character.

The literature of Germany will prove to you a never-failing source of interest. The works of their great poets, dramatists, historians, and scientific men are full of beauty, and will amply reward you for your labour.

Italian is by no means so difficult a language as German, and there are excellent historical works

contained in its literature. Its poets are justly celebrated ; and should you pursue the study of this musical language, so as to enter thoroughly into its beauties, you will find many sources of pleasure.

I should not, however, recommend the study of these languages, unless you propose to use them as but a means to the great end which I wish ever to place before you.*

* “Luther particularly insisted on the necessity of studying literature and languages : ‘What use is there,’ it may be asked, ‘in learning Latin, Greek, and Hebrew? We can read the Bible very well in German.’ ‘Without languages,’ replies he, ‘we could not have received the Gospel. . . . Languages are the scabbard that contains the sword of the Spirit ; they are the casket that guards the jewels ; they are the vessel that holds the wine ; and, as the Gospel says, they are the baskets in which the loaves and fishes are kept to feed the multitude. If we neglect the languages, we shall not only eventually lose the Gospel, but be unable to speak or write in Latin or in German. No sooner did men cease to cultivate them than Christendom declined, even until it fell under the power of the Pope. But now that languages are again honoured, they shed such light that all the world is astonished, and every one is forced to acknowledge that our Gospel is almost as pure as that of the apostles themselves. In former times the holy fathers were frequently mistaken, because they were ignorant of languages ; and in our days there are some, who, like the Waldenses, do not think the languages to be of any use ; but although their doctrine is good, they have often erred in the real meaning of the sacred text ; they are without arms against error, and I fear very much that their faith will not remain pure. If the languages had not made me positive as to the meaning of the Word, I

Before I leave the subject of language and composition, I would bring before you one means of

might have been a pious monk, and quietly preached the truth in the obscurity of a cloister ; but I should have left the Pope, the sophists, and the Antichristian Empire, still unshaken.'

"Luther did not concern himself about the education of the clergy only ; it was his desire that knowledge should not be confined to the Church ; he proposed extending it to the laity, who hitherto had been deprived of it. He called for the establishment of libraries, which should comprise not only editions and commentaries of the schoolmen and of the fathers of the Church, but also the works of orators and poets, even were they heathens, as well as writings devoted to the fine arts, law, medicine, and history. 'These productions,' said he, 'serve to make known the works and the wonders of God.' This effort on the part of Luther is one of the most important produced by the Reformation. He emancipated learning from the hands of the priests, who had monopolised it like those of Egypt in times of old, and put it within the reach of all. From this impulse given by the Reformation have proceeded the greatest developments of modern times. Those laymen, whether men of letters or scholars, who now revile the Reformation, forget that they themselves are its offspring, and that, without it they would still be, like ignorant children, under the rod of the clergy. The Reformation perceived the close tie that connected all the sciences ; it saw that, as all knowledge is derived from God, it leads man back to God. It desired that all men should learn, and that they should learn everything. 'Those who despise profane literature,' said Melancthon, 'hold theology in no greater estimation.' Their contempt is a mere pretext with which they seek to conceal their idleness."

—*D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation.*

intellectual improvement, which in a family circle is productive of much profit and pleasurable interest. There are many exercises connected with composition, which lead the way to original essays; one of the most interesting is to take any given period of history, or any subject of novel character, and assigning to each member of the family group a part to prepare, appoint an evening, when all the papers shall be read in succession. I give you, from my note-book, a few heads of subjects, which may thus pleasantly and profitably occupy your attention.

The Golden age of Greece.* Here each young

* "Learned men have marked out four of these happy ages. The first is, the Grecian age, which commenced near the time of the Peloponnesian war, and extended till the time of Alexander the Great, within which period we have Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Æschines, Lysias, Isocrates, Pindar, Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Menander, Anacreon, Theocritus, Lysippus, Apelles, Phidias, Praxiteles. The second is the Roman age, included within the days of Julius Cæsar and Augustus, affording us Catullus, Lucretius, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Phædrus, Cæsar, Cicero, Livy, Sallust, Varro, and Vitruvius. The third age is that of the restoration of learning under the Popes, Julius II. and Leo X.; when flourished Aristo, Tasso, Sanmasarius, Vida, Machiavel, Guicciardini, Davila, Erasmus, Paul Jovins, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian. The fourth comprehends the age of Louis XIV. and Queen Anne, when flourished in France, Corneille, Racine, De Retz,

person must take one of the celebrated characters, and write a short biographical sketch. Thus you will have assembled the representatives of all the great men of that period; and you may do the same with the golden age of Rome, or of the age of Louis XIV. of France. The characters connected with the Reformation, or the revolutions of different countries, will prove interesting. For one evening you may choose wonderful discoveries; for another, ancient cities, modern capitals, or the statesmen of particular reigns. You will find no difficulty in selecting subjects; and from experience, having in my youth been accustomed to take a part in such little meetings, I can assure you of the great interest imparted to many branches of study by such a plan being carried out.

It will be difficult for me to give you any certain arrangement for the proper division of time, as so much must depend upon your position with respect to those around you. If you are so situated that you can make your own disposition of the day, let me recommend you to take the morning for the severer studies you propose to follow, and the Molière, Boileau, Fontaine, Baptiste, Rousseau, Bossuet, Fenelon, Bourdaloue, Pascal, Malebranche, Masillon, Bruyere, Bayle, Fontenelle, Vertot; and in England, Dryden, Pope, Addison, Prior, Swift, Parnell, Arbuthnot, Congreve, Otway, Young, Rowe, Atterbury, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Tillotson, Temple, Boyle, Locke, Newton, and Clarke."—*Blair.*

afternoon for those which require less intensity of thought.

Early rising will be a valuable assistance to you in your plan ; and if your health offer no obstacle, the habit is one that is an essential requisite towards the attainment of the earnest character : not only is it valuable because of the actual time thus saved, but it is generally the accompaniment of a healthy, energetic state of mind ; not enervated by self-indulgence, but ready for action.* You will not,

* This was well illustrated in the habits of Sir Walter Scott : " It had been his custom, whenever professional business or social engagements occupied the middle part of the day, to seize some hours for study after he was supposed to have retired to bed. His physicians suggested that this was very likely to aggravate his nervous head-aches, the only malady he was subject to in the prime of his manhood ; and contemplating with a steady eye a course not only of unremitting but of increasing industry, he resolved to reverse his plan, and carried his purpose into execution with unflinching energy. In short, he had now adopted the habits in which, with very slender variations, he ever after persevered when in the country. He rose by five o'clock, lit his own fire when the season required one. He was seated at his desk by six o'clock, all his papers arranged before him in the most accurate order, all his books of reference marshalled around him on the floor, while at least one favourite dog lay watching his eye, just beyond the line of circumvallation. Thus, by the time the family assembled for breakfast, between nine and ten, he had done enough (in his own language) to ' break the neck of the day's work.' After breakfast, a couple of hours more were given to his solitary tasks ; by noon he was, as he

perhaps, find it desirable to precede the morn, but you must not let all the glories of rising day be always lost to your view.

“ The winged hours,
Commission’d, in alternate watch they stand,
The sun’s bright portals, and the skies command,
Close or unclose the eternal gates of day,
Bar heaven with clouds, or roll those clouds away.”

It is necessary you should have a plan formed, in accordance with which you must act. No one but your parents, some dear friend, or yourself, can form this for you. Having once arranged your course of study, and the time you will allot to each particular branch, you must not let a slight cause prevent your continuing to pursue it with regularity. Accustom yourself, also, each evening to

used to say, ‘his own man.’ When the weather was bad, he would labour incessantly all the morning; but the general rule was, to be out and on horseback by one o’clock at the latest; while, if any more distant excursion had been proposed overnight, he was ready to start on it by ten. His occasional rainy days of uninterrupted study, forming, as he said, a fund in his favour, out of which he was entitled to draw for accommodation whenever the sun shone with special brightness. It was another rule, that *every letter he received should be answered the same day*. In turning over his enormous mass of correspondence, I have almost invariably found some indication that when a letter had remained more than a day or two unanswered, it had been so because he found occasion for inquiry, or deliberate consideration.”—*Lockhart’s Life of Scott.*

review the progress made during the day, and endeavour to form a clear idea of the duties which may devolve upon you on the morrow. In the calm seclusion of your chamber you will be able to bring under review all the employments of the day ; you will judge if to some favourite pursuit you have not given more time than was consistent with the claims of actual duty. This recollectedness is invaluable. It is as if you were a spectator at a distance, viewing some moving picture, and capable of forming a far more correct idea of the scene and of the results, than one actually engaged in the strife.

When a family is numerous, the happiness induced by its youthful members pursuing a well-arranged course of study together, is very great. I have before me, at the present moment, a vision of a happy group, composed of three sisters. Their table is covered with books of reference and maps. Their morning's employment has nearly drawn to its close, when the door opens, and the beloved father enters. Bright is the expression of parental love on his countenance, as he advances and inquires, with interest, the subject of their morning's study. Each is eager to tell of some new idea or discovery in the realm of thought, some fact, which has struck with startling novelty upon her youthful mind. He listens with pleased attention to all his children pour into his ready ear ; and then, from

his riper judgment and more matured reason, he gives to them those enlarged views, those high principles of action, according to which the experienced Christian and man of cultivated intellect will form his estimate of earthly things. Many are the subjects upon which his pleased and attentive listeners desire his opinion. Many are the lessons of wisdom that they thus receive, which will for ever remain associated in their minds with the hallowed remembrance of parental love :—

“ He in whose voice, to bless his child,
Lay tones of love so deep.”

The evening draws the circle of home pleasure and parental influence only closer. The same group assemble around the fireside, with the addition of other members of that favoured circle; some favourite author is brought forward, and the poet's picture will well describe that happy party :—

“ Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,

* * * * *

So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

* * * * *

Fireside enjoyment, home-bred happiness,
The poet's or historian's page, by one
Made vocal for the amusement of the rest.”

Happy children and happy parent! This is no imaginary picture, and though the beloved and revered head of that family has been called to his

rest, his works yet follow him. His blessed influence yet remains in the hearts and minds of his children, as a cherished recollection, as a guide to conduct them in the same path of happiness and immortality.*

Permit, my beloved readers, this passing tribute to the memory of one who can never be forgotten by his children. One who through life ever exemplified all the most exalted features of the earnest Christian character, and to whom, in life and death, might be applied the words of holy

* The tender and well-timed reproofs of this beloved parent still dwell on my memory.

To a child who was regretting that some desired change of scene could not be effected, he gently said, in the language of Madame Guyon :—

“ If place we seek or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none ;
But with a God to guide our way,
The willing soul would go or stay.”

When a dear friend, who had wandered from the path of happiness, and was seeking it in worldly pursuits, expressed it as his opinion that life was to be spent in pleasure, he said, with a deep seriousness and earnestness of expression, that made their desired impression upon the heart of the beloved friend he addressed :—

“ Live while you live ! the epicure would say,
And seize the pleasure of the present day.
Live while you live ! the sacred preacher cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies.
Lord, in my view, may both united be,
I live to pleasure, while I live to thee.”

Scripture, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

You are not, and cannot be aware, my dear young friends, unless you have tried the experiment, of the vast means within your power for strengthening the family bond. Thus, if the elder sister be able to take the lead and direct the studies of the younger members of the circle, a tie of mutual sympathy and interest will soon be found, compared to which many other subjects will sink into insignificance. You must not, however, consider any in the light of mere spectators; the part you are to act, as an elder sister, is not to study *for* them, but *with* them, and this will be one of the grand secrets of success. When seated around your study table, with your books of reference before you, give the Gazetteer to one, the Biographical Dictionary to a second, the Chronological Chart to a third; and thus, let each feel that they have a part, however small, to act in the important process of united study.

Be assured, that where the members of a family circle are united in their desire for mental progression, however retired their situation may be, whatever the difficulties in their way, if they cultivate those advantages which they do possess, they will be certain of reward.

It has been well said, "He that waits for an

opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes, and regret in the last hour his useless intentions and barren zeal." Delay not until you are more conveniently situated, or until you can obtain more desirable helps for study. Collect whatever materials are around you. From a "Pinnock's Catechism," or a "Magnall," you may draw materials for your outline, and then proceed to complete your historical picture by any means within your power. Some books on natural history or philosophy you assuredly possess, from which you and your dear companions may cull instruction and profit. The old proverb, "Where there is a will there is a way," was never more true in any case than in this, and I shall be rejoiced if you experience it to be so.

CHAPTER V.

CULTIVATION OF TASTE—THE FINE ARTS—HINTS ON DRAWING—MUSIC—ACCOMPLISHMENTS—THEIR PROPER AIM—TO BE MADE SUBSERVIENT TO THE GREAT END OF LIFE.

In works of art, think justly; what praise canst thou render unto man ?
For he made not his own mind, nor is he the source of contrivance.
If a cunning workman make an engine that fashioneth curious works,
Which hath the praise, the machine or its maker—the engine or he that framed it ?
And could he frame it so subtly as to give it a will and freedom,
Endow it with complicated powers, and a glorious living soul ?
Who, while he admireth the wondrous understanding creature,
Will not pay deeper homage to the Maker of master minds ?
Otherwise thou art senseless as the Pagan, that adoreth his own handywork ;
Yea, while thou boastest of thy wisdom, thy mind is as the mind of the savage ; .
For he boweth down to his idols, and thou art a worshipper of self,
Giving to the reasoning machine, the credit due to its Creator.

Proverbial Philosophy.

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE, in the preceding chapters, been anxious to lead you, my beloved readers, to a contemplation of the great end of life, and of the means by which you may best subserve that end ; it will be still my object to show you how the earnest Christian will carry out this principle into every employment of his life, and render subservient to it every faculty of his nature.

It is the remark of an eminent writer, "that of all the creatures within the sphere of our inspection, *man* alone appears to be endowed with powers for contemplating many of the great designations, the extensive and various uses, dependencies, and relations in the creation that surrounds him : hence he is impressed with that just sense of beauty, of wisdom, order, and goodness, which not only form the foundation of religion and virtue, but of all his intellectual satisfaction and happiness."

The subject of this chapter I feel to be far beyond my feeble grasp ; all I can do is to give a few hints which may lead you to seek for yourselves in these

fair fields of beauty. I shall first give you a definition of Taste, drawn from the best authors—show you that to the gratification of this principle we owe some of the most refined and elevating pleasures we possess. I shall seek to lead you to a contemplation of the beautiful, as displayed to us by our Great Creator. I shall then, continuing the subject of the pleasures of taste, trace their gratification in the fine arts, and endeavour to give you some general ideas, which may serve as a clue or guide in your future studies. I shall strive to show you that the common view taken of the cultivation of the fine arts is far below their true value; and I shall, lastly, bring before you the all-important truth that such studies must ever be pursued in complete subordination to scripture truth.

The cultivation of taste becomes an important object of attention, when we view it as connected with the proper and full development of the powers bestowed upon us by the all-wise Creator.

Taste has been defined as “the power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art.”

Blair considers it as a faculty common to all men; but adds, “that the degrees in which it is possessed are widely different. In some men only the feeble glimmerings of taste appear; while in others, taste rises to an acute discernment and a

lively enjoyment of the most refined beauties ; but if it be owing in part to nature, it is owing to education and culture still more."

The importance of cultivation of taste will appear to us, from the evident superiority of those nations, in civilization and refinement, who have attended to its development. The exercise of this faculty is always attended with improvement, if rightly directed. This is the great law of our nature, and holds both in our bodily and mental powers.

A taste for the beauties of painting, or an ear for music, is not at once formed. These may exist, but require cultivation to be fully developed. It is in the same way that an acquaintance with the best authors operates in gradually refining our perception of the beauties of composition. So great an influence also have reason and good sense on all the operations and decisions of taste, that a "thoroughly good taste may be considered to be compounded of natural sensibility to beauty, and of an improved understanding." *

" What then is taste, but these internal powers,
Active and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse? A discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust

* My aim, in this chapter, being to give a few clear ideas upon an important subject, I have freely availed myself of the assistance afforded by the best authors.

From things deform'd, or disarranged, or gross
In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow;
But God alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.
He, mighty Parent! wise and just in all,
Free as the vital breeze, or light of heaven,
Reveals the charms of nature.

But though Heaven
In every breast hath sown these early seeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
Without enlivening suns, and genial showers,
And shelter from the blast—in vain we hope
The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
Or yield the harvest promised in its spring."

Thus then it is important that taste should be in frequent exercise, and that reason should be brought to bear upon all the objects presented to our mind in reference to this subject.

Blair considers the characteristics "of taste, when brought to its most perfect state, as reducible to two; viz., delicacy and correctness. The first respects principally the perfection of that natural sensibility on which taste is founded. It implies those finer organs or powers which enable us to discover beauties that lie hid from a vulgar eye. One may have strong sensibilities and yet be deficient in delicate taste. In this state taste generally exists among rude and unrefined nations. But

a person of delicate taste both feels strongly and feels accurately. Correctness of taste respects chiefly the improvement which that faculty receives through its connexion with the understanding. A man of correct taste is one who is never imposed on by counterfeit beauties, who carries always in his mind that standard of good sense which he employs in judging of everything."

A question will arise, does the diversity of taste which we know exists among men, arise in every case from a corruption of that principle ?

" Different minds

Incline to different objects: one pursues
The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild;
Another sighs for harmony and grace,
And gentlest beauty—

* * * * *

Such and so various are the tastes of men."

In reason there is but one conclusion that can be true; not so in the objects of taste. "Truth, which is the object of reason, is one; beauty, which is the object of taste, is manifold."

But, as Blair with justice observes, "this admissible diversity can only have place where the objects of taste are different."

Thus, one person may be struck with the elegance and simplicity of one poet, while I may prefer the fire of another; if, however, my antagonist were

to deny that the poet I preferred possessed any beauties, I might then refer him to what I consider the standard of taste.

The question, What is this standard? is an interesting one. Nature may assist us in some degree, but we require something further, as there will be many occasions when we cannot judge by a comparison with her.

We may ask, Where shall we find a perfect standard for the taste of others? What is there of sufficient power to take upon itself the responsibility of acting as the arbiter? The answer is found in this truth:—The internal sense of beauty, guided and enlightened by reason, is the foundation of taste. “That which men concur most in admiring must be held to be beautiful. That taste must be esteemed just and true which coincides with the general sentiments of men. In this standard we must rest. To this sense of mankind the ultimate appeal must ever lie in all works of taste.”

Do not, however, my dear readers, imagine that there is no other criterion than the one I have now mentioned. There are certain principles of judgment and reason which we may apply to these subjects, as well as to philosophy and science. Thus it has been said of taste, that it is “a sort of compound power, in which the light of the under-

standing always mingles, more or less, with the feelings of sentiment."

It will be well that we should dwell for a moment upon the goodness of our Creator, in thus providing us with pleasures of so exquisite a kind as those arising from the exercise of taste and imagination. One of our poets has beautifully expressed this:—

“ Not content

With every food of life to nourish man,
By kind illusions of the wondering sense,
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye,
Or music to his ear.”

It will be interesting to inquire, What are the sources of the pleasures of taste? These comprise “all the pleasures of the imagination, whether afforded by natural objects or by the imitations and descriptions of them.”

Addison, in his papers upon this subject, published in the “*Spectator*,” divides these sources into three heads—beauty, grandeur, and novelty,*

* Blair gives the following as sources of the pleasures of taste:—“grandeur, or sublimity, beauty—the separate principles of which are colour, figure, and motion, novelty, imitation, the pleasures of melody and harmony.”

With regard to beauty, Harding observes, “that, besides the beauty of form, there is, also, the beauty of composition, of light and shade, of colour and expression.”

Dugald Stewart remarks, that “the first ideas of beauty formed by the mind are, in all probability, derived from colours.”

and his remarks upon the causes of our delight in these things are so just, and I think beautiful, that I have great pleasure in bringing them before you.

“One of the final causes of our delight in anything that is great may be this : the supreme Author of our being has so formed the soul of man, that nothing but Himself can be its last, adequate, and proper happiness ; because, therefore, a great part of our happiness must arise from the contemplation of His Being, that He might give our souls a just relish of such a contemplation, He has made them naturally delight in the apprehension of what is great or unlimited. Our admiration will improve into the highest pitch of astonishment and devotion when we contemplate his nature, that is neither circumscribed by time nor place, nor to be comprehended by the largest capacity of a created being.

“He has annexed a secret pleasure to the idea of anything that is *new* or *uncommon*, that He might encourage us in the pursuit after knowledge, and engage us to search into the wonders of his creation ; and, in the last place, He has made everything that is beautiful, in all other objects, pleasant ; or, rather, has made so many objects appear beautiful, that He might render the whole creation more gay and beautiful. He has given almost everything

about us the power of raising an agreeable idea in the imagination."

Addison divides the pleasures of imagination into two kinds: first, the primary, which proceed from objects before our eyes; and what he calls the secondary, or those arising from such images as once entered in at our eyes, and are afterwards called up into the mind, either barely by its own operations, or on occasions of something without us, as statues or descriptions. This secondary pleasure of the imagination proceeds from that action of the mind which compares the ideas arising from the original objects with the ideas we receive from the statue, picture, description, or sound that represents them. It is this that not only gives us a relish for statuary and painting, but enables us to enter with delight into the descriptions of the poet, and the magnificent discoveries of the philosopher.

My object, my dear readers, in bringing these subjects before you, is, with the hope that they may serve to you as germs of future thought, that you may be induced to examine into them for yourselves. While I would carefully guard you against overrating their importance, and lead you ever to cultivate them in strict subserviency to the great end of life, I cannot at all enter into the views of those who undervalue the imaginative powers. To them we owe some of the noblest efforts of human

intellect, whether we contemplate the works of a Phidias or a Homer, a Michael Angelo or a Dante, a Milton or a Wordsworth.

“The high-born soul

Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft,
Through fields of air, pursues the flying storm,
Rides on the volley'd lightning through the heavens ;
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and, hovering round the sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light ; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of time. Thence far effused,
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets ; through its burning signs,
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode,
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world untired
She meditates th' eternal depth below ;
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges ; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallowed up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,

That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment ; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene."

Considering taste, then, as the power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature or art, independently of the high and noble gratification experienced in viewing the Creator in his works, the influence of a love for nature is most beneficial in its effects upon the youthful mind. Blair justly observes, that "Providence seems to have plainly pointed out this useful purpose to which the pleasures of taste may be applied, by interposing them in a middle station between the pleasures of sense and those of pure intellect. We were not designed to grovel always among objects so low as the former ; nor are we capable of dwelling constantly in so high a region as the latter. The pleasures of taste refresh the mind after the toils of the intellect and the labours of abstract study, and they gradually raise it above the attachments of sense and prepare it for the enjoyments of virtue."

The quiet and rational enjoyments of a country life are, in many instances, intimately associated with the pleasures of taste. Thus we find those

who have been early led to take delight in the sweet sights and sounds of nature, prepared to follow with advantage the study of any particular branch of art to which, in the order of Providence, they may be directed.

A perennial spring of the purest gratification ever exists to the lover of nature. It has been well observed, that “taste strews flowers in paths of literature and science, and breathing expressive sounds, and picturing celestial forms, qualifies the hour of sorrow, by indulging the secret sense of cheerfulness, which in its operation refines the soft, and swells the strong ; and joining nature’s general song through many a varying tune, unfolds the harmony of human souls.” *

I would not, however, pass with so slight a mention that which will ever be the primary source of the happiness the Christian student will enjoy from a consideration of the glories and beauties of creation. It is here that the pleasures of taste will receive their full fruition, when we rise from the fair but fading scenes of earthly loveliness, to a contemplation of that great and glorious Being who is the source of all perfection : “Who created all things,” says Saint Augustine, “is better than all things ; who beautified all things, is more beautiful than all things ; who made strength, is stronger

* Mrs. Chapone.

than all things ; who made great things, is greater than all things. Whatever thou lovest, He is that to thee. Learn to love the workman in his work—the Creator in his creatures. Let not that which was made by Him possess thee, lest thou lose Him by whom thyself was made."

It is this spirit of devotion which inspires the Christian's breast with true happiness. His enjoyment of the beauty he perceives in the varying landscape around him is derived from the highest source ; he rejoices, as a loving child, in the goodness of his Heavenly Father ; and, whether he views the solemn grandeur of the starry firmament, the wide expanse of the ocean, or the calm radiance of a setting sun, displayed upon the landscape around, he feels that it is the glorious manifestation of his Heavenly Father's attributes that he contemplates.

"What do they not lose," said the pious Legh Richmond, "who are strangers to serious meditation on the wonders and beauties of created nature ! How gloriously the God of creation shines in his works ! Not a tree, nor leaf, nor flower, not a bird or insect, but proclaims, in glowing language, 'God made me !'"

It was the vigorous but chastened imagination of this excellent man, that rendered his works so attractive to a numerous class. He delighted in

nature, and was keenly alive to the beauties she presents. Hence, even in his smaller works, he engages the attention of his readers, by the vivid and beautiful pictures he presents to their imaginations.

Let me then urge you, my beloved readers, to cultivate this constant association of earthly beauty with the consideration of the great Source from which it is derived. You will find your sense of enjoyment quickened, and new springs of delight will ever arise around you. I consider an appreciation of the beauties of nature of exceeding value to the young, and I shall not fear that it will ever be carried to an excess, if you seek thus to realize the presence of the Creator in his works.

It is rightly observed, "There is no way in which the young can better learn the sentiments of devotion, or the old preserve them, than by cultivating those habits of thought and observation which convert the scenes of nature into the temple of God, and which make us see the Deity in every appearance we behold, and change the world, of which the ignorant and thoughtless see only the reign of time and chance, into the kingdom of the ever-loving and ever-present God of the universe."

Not only should I desire for you a perception of the beautiful that lies more obviously around you; but I would not have you rest satisfied without an

enlarged idea of the wonders in the kingdom of nature revealed to us by the microscope. I would invite you—

“To trace in nature’s most minute design,
The signature and stamp of power divine,
Contrivance intricate expressed with ease,
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees.”

You will be well rewarded for any trouble you may take in the investigation of these minute forms of beauty; and another innocent and most pleasurable source of improvement will be in your possession.

Nor must you be contented with a mere scrutiny of their outward form. Some knowledge of botany must accompany your observations on flowers, or you will not be able to enter into all the extreme beauty of the delicate arrangement of the material form. It is with flowers as with all other parts of the visible universe—viewed in the light of science, they unfold to us new wonders.

It is from these studies that will arise in after-years many unforeseen pleasures. The mind that has thus dwelt with superior intelligence upon the beauties of creation, will have laid in a rich store of gratification for those years, when the decaying faculties of the mind no longer permit of fresh acquisition.

An interesting exemplification of this is seen in

the character of Wilberforce. In advancing years, a lovely picture of his hour of daily exercise is presented to us by his sons. "Who that ever joined him in it, cannot see him as he walked around his garden at Highwood? Now in animated and even playful conversation, and then drawing from his copious pockets (to contain Dalrymple's State Papers was their standard measure) some favourite volume or other, a Psalter, a Horace, a Shakspeare, or Cowper, and reading and reciting, or 'refreshing' passages; and then catching at long-stored flower-leaves as the wind blew them from the page, or standing before a favourite gum cistus to repair their loss. Then he would point out the harmony of the tints, the beauty of the pencilling, the perfection of the colouring, and run up all into those ascriptions of praise to the Almighty, which were ever welling from his grateful heart. He loved flowers with all the simple delight of childhood. He would hover from bed to bed over his favourites, and when he came in, even from his shortest walk, deposit a few that he had gathered safely in his room, before he joined the breakfast-table. Often would he say, as he enjoyed their fragrance, 'How good is God to us! What should we think of a friend who had furnished us with a magnificent house, and all we needed, and then, coming in to see that all had been provided according to his

wishes, should be hurt that no scents had been placed in the rooms? Yet so has God dealt with us. Surely flowers are the smiles of his loveliness.’’

It has been said, “A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.” And this holds good pre-eminently with the early associations we form in connexion with my present subject.

I have spoken of the influences of nature; I must now proceed to bring before you the advantage of some acquaintance with the Fine Arts, and their relation to the cultivation of taste. I might bring forward many instances to show you the great value of these studies, when carried on in the fear of God and with a single eye to his glory.

The late excellent Richard Cecil was one of these; his biographer informs us that “his taste in the sister arts of painting, poetry, and music, was refined, and his judgment learned. In his younger days he had studied and excelled in painting and music, and though he laid them aside, that he might devote all his powers to his work, yet the savour of them so far remained, that I have been witness innumerable times, both in public and private, to the felicity of his illustrations drawn from these subjects, and to the superiority that intimate knowledge of them gave him over most

persons with whom they happened to be brought forward.”*

The term Fine Arts is an expression often used, but that is not exactly defined. Mr. Hazlitt says, that the “fine arts may be viewed as embracing all those arts in which the powers of imitation or invention are exerted, chiefly with a view to the production of pleasure, by the immediate impression which they make on the mind. But the phrase has of late, we think, been restricted to a narrower and more technical signification; viz., to painting, sculpture, engraving, and architecture, which appeal to the eye as the medium of pleasure, and, by way of eminence, to the first two of these arts. The departments of the fine arts which appeal to the mind through the ear, are music and poetry.” The

* “A just feeling in the fine arts is an elegant acquirement and capable of cultivation. Drawing is necessary to many pursuits and useful arts; Locke has included it among the accomplishments becoming a gentleman, and we may add, it is much more useful to the artizan. Good taste and execution in design are necessary to manufactories, and, consequently, they contribute to the resources of a country. I am not without hope that a new impulse may be given to the cultivation of the fine arts by explaining their relation to the natural history of man and animals, and by showing how a knowledge of outward form and the accuracy of drawing, which is a consequence of it, are related to the interior structure and functions.”—*Sir Charles Bell.*

philosophy of the fine arts is a department of study which has occupied the minds of many deep thinkers, and has been raised by the Germans to the rank of a science, under the name of *Æsthetics*. “The purpose of this study is to discover *why* certain objects give pleasure to the mind, and why the same object gives different degrees of pleasure to different persons.”

A just idea of the nature and value of art, is intimately associated with the efforts you are making for your own present improvement. The great error in the young artist is considering the exercise required purely a mechanical one; and you will place a most serious barrier in the way of your own progression, if you are satisfied to view your study of art in such a light; you must regard the pencil or brush but as a means of expressing ideas, just as much as written or spoken words represent thought. “*Li poeti dipingono colle parole, li pittori parlano con l'opere,*” said Annibal Carracci.—(Poets paint with words, painters speak by works.) And this principle you must seek to recognise in every effort of the pencil. Mechanical power is the first thing you have to seek to acquire; but you must, in the meantime, be striving to obtain correct ideas and an enlarged view of the connexion of art with external beauty. I have spoken to you of the deep gratification afforded by

the lovely forms of nature, and if you cultivate an appreciation of its beauties, you will soon find that that which formerly would have been passed unheeded, will now start forth to the observant eye, clothed in peculiar forms and tints of loveliness. Faculties which had hitherto lain dormant, viz., the appreciation of figure, colour, and the perception of beauty, are gradually developed in the breast of the earnest student, and prove a new bond of union with external nature.

I shall now proceed to give you a few general ideas upon art as applied to the representation of natural objects.

I have spoken before of the great mistake made by many persons, in the pursuit of drawing in its different branches—when the sign is made everything, and the idea is quite set aside. The student directs attention solely to the mechanical process, without a perception of the intellectual one which is to be associated with it; unable, from his limited knowledge of the capabilities of art, to soar beyond the character of a humble imitator. Others consider that a few lessons from a first-rate master will give them that which they seek.

“Thus many, very many persons,” says Sir J. Reynolds, “still continue to imagine that it consists in certain secrets they can purchase, and soon put into practice.”

You must first determine to gain a complete mastery over the pencil. Though a simple instrument, yet it is a most effective one, and the power to use it skilfully is highly important.

"Art," writes a valuable author, "is the graphic interpretation of nature. Every student in art must not only be furnished, in the first instance, with ideas, but with some graphic means of expressing them. The first difficulty to be overcome in art is the attainment of signs for the expression of ideas."

You must remember, that the sure foundation for excellence will be your attentive study of form, or outline, and light and shade. These are, as it were, the steps by which you will gradually ascend to correct practice. We may consider form, light and shade, and colour, as the three grand divisions of pictorial art, and the merits of one can never compensate for any deficiency in the others.

I will now conclude this part of my subject, by giving you, in an extract from "Elementary Art"—a most valuable work by Harding—a short view of the true value of art and the right principles upon which you must proceed:—

"If the study of art be commenced on right principles, and steadily pursued, skill in its practice may be attained by all in proportion to their general aptitude for other intellectual pursuits. Art, if

properly viewed, should be esteemed an indispensable part of a liberal education, for who is there that would not feel it to be an acquisition? It has, indeed, been called a new sense, from the gratification it affords, and the power it gives of fixing scenes, persons, and events, to which the memory can refer. Who is there to whom, in future life, such a pursuit would not be delightful, if not eminently useful? What a source of pleasurable interest to themselves, to be enabled with the pencil to recal past scenes both to the mind and the eye, with truth, freshness, and reality! The world has been greatly benefited by the valuable information derived from pictorial art. Without fatigue, all the ends of the earth, its inhabitants, its forms and features, organic and inorganic, are rendered familiar to us. It brings home to our hearts the relics and vestiges of former ages; it records what 'Time's effacing fingers' are daily obliterating; it enlarges on all sides our field of mental vision, and becomes daily a more indispensable coadjutor to the extension of knowledge. However desirable in other instances, skill in art is highly important in the profession of surgery; in short, there are few conditions of life in which it would fail to prove a most useful auxiliary, applicable to many purposes not contemplated until its powers are tested. As an accomplishment, it is no

small part of its recommendation that it has often proved a most valuable resource in the vicissitudes of fortune. Seeing the general usefulness of art, it seems truly astonishing that, as a branch of education, it should be so much neglected. This neglect appears the more striking, when it is considered that, under *proper* instruction, all might acquire sufficient knowledge for every practical purpose. The youthful and the least informed mind may be initiated into a knowledge of the principles of art without more consideration of innate predisposition than is looked for in regard to other studies. Not unfrequently, from ignorance of the benefits derivable from art, it is looked upon merely as a busy idleness—a pastime occasionally filling up a few vacant hours, or at best, merely affording—more especially from the hand of a daughter—some trifling ornament for the drawing-room, whose appearance is not generally improved by such decorations. It has been the ordinary fate of art in these days, notwithstanding the advantages which it offers, to be looked upon as little better than a plaything. This arises from a want of perception of the importance of art, and from an opinion of its not being within the reach of regular instruction. Works of art are, indeed, looked upon as the result of some especial gift, with which artists are endowed by nature. There can, how-

ever, be no greater mistake. Can persons be great in art, and yet be in all other respects without talent? Or do the most highly-gifted in other respects, understand art without the aid of observation and reflection? Without these, they can neither justly appreciate its merits nor derive true pleasure from its beauties; and in consequence much of the book of nature is sealed up to them. All her grand and graceful combinations are lost on those who refuse to study properly the only means which can open their eyes to behold and their minds to receive the varied impressions of grandeur and beauty."*

I shall now, my dear readers, endeavour to give

* Perhaps some of my young readers will be anxiously inquiring the way in which they are to proceed in attaining artistic skill. Good copies will be the first requisite. A work of Harding's, called "Lessons in Art," is invaluable for the beginner. Michael Angelo's advice to his pupils was, "Learn to sketch before you attempt to finish;" and the directions given for doing this in Harding's book are most clear and practicable. The two other works by the same author, viz., "The Use of the Chalk or Pencil," and "Principles and Practice of Art," read with attention by a learner, would give a key to the accomplishment of much that could not otherwise be attainable. I have given a list at the end of this book of some works on art, which I consider exceedingly valuable; but in the absence of these, a few of the numbers of "Lessons on Art" will do much. The widow of Burgess has published a work called "Elementary Studies," which I

you a few hints upon your musical studies. The enjoyment of music is found to prevail throughout the whole world; and the reason is, that it addresses itself to the sympathies and common feelings of our nature. An intimate connexion appears to exist between the emotions of the mind and the gratification of the sense of hearing, and it is in music that this is seen with great effect. Its tones often speak a language to the soul, which is far richer than words can convey. It must be remembered that a correct musical composition is as truly expressive of ideas as the more tangible signs of words, either spoken or written. Thus, all nations have their battle pieces, or simple strains of melody, either with or without words, in which they give expression to their feelings. Many interesting instances are related of the effect produced by their patriotic songs or soft airs.

It is, however, where music is invested with the dignity of an intellectual pursuit, and when it has become an art, that it will be an instrument of important moral improvement and civilization.

The author of a "History of Music" has thus admirably described its value:—"It has been justly highly recommend to be also used for beginners. Any of the copies left by Burgess are invaluable for forming a bold style. The works I have mentioned above should be *studied* with deep attention.

said that music had no mortal artist for its inventor : it was implanted in man's nature, as a pure and heavenly gift, by the great Creator himself. Of all the fine arts, it alone comes home to every heart. The uncultivated rustic, who would feel less pleasure in contemplating the Apollo Belvidere than in gazing at one of the coarse painted plaster of Paris figures hawked through the streets, and would turn from one of the finest of Titian's paintings, to admire some flaring sign over a country inn, is alive to the tones of music, and can feel all his sympathies awakened by a tender and lively air. Music is so much a part of our nature, surrounds us so completely in this vocal world of ours, that its influence begins at the cradle, and only ends at the grave. It has even been conceived to make part of the enjoyment in a happier state of existence. There is a sweet harmony even in inanimate nature—the measured flow of the waters, the regular rushing of the tide, the wintry gust sighing through the woods, or the summer breeze rustling the leaves, and the sweet echoes returned from rock to glen, or breathing in melting cadence along the waters—which gives the listener a feeling, as if he were admitted to a communion with the unseen world. Sir Henry Halford alludes distantly, but affectionately, to the case of George III., who had been his patient, and

bears testimony to the power which music had over his mind, in mitigating the sadness of seclusion. I have elsewhere met, though I cannot exactly recollect where it may have been, in some of the journals of the day, with a most touching account of the venerable King, sightless and secluded, a prey to visionary delusions, yet finding a sweet solace for his troubled mind in the touches of sweet harmony ! There, at his instrument, he might often be seen wrapt in thought, as the strings responded to his touch in the strains of Handel."

I am anxious that to you, my dear readers, music should prove a source of the highest gratification ; but to do so, it must not be pursued as a purely mechanical art, but its aims and capabilities must be studied, or you will never rise to a perception of the many refined and exquisite pleasures associated with its exercise.

The effect of music upon the best feelings of our nature is thus described by Bishop Beveridge, as his own experience :—

" That which I have found the best recreation, both to my mind and body, whensoever either of them stands in need of it, is music, which exercises at once both my body and soul, especially when I play myself ; for then methinks the same motion that my hand makes upon the instrument, the instrument makes upon my heart. It calls in

my spirits, composes my thoughts, delights my ear, recreates my mind, and not only fits me for after-business, but fills my heart at the present with pure and useful thoughts ; so that when the music sounds the sweetest in my ears, truth commonly flows the clearest into my mind. And hence it is that I find my soul is become more harmonious, by being accustomed so much to harmony—so averse to all manners of discord, that the least jarring sound, either in notes or words, seems very harsh and unpleasant to me."

It is in relation to these beneficial influences that I more particularly would direct your attention to music. I regard it as so important an assistance to the promotion of the cheerful harmony of the family circle, that it is well worthy an earnest effort to obtain sufficient proficiency for that purpose.

I have before taken occasion to speak of the sphere in which your mission and calling will lie. In the calm review I requested you to make of the capabilities of your position, with reference to your own progress and the benefit of others, put your musical acquirements down as one of the great means of good in your power.

The theory and practice of harmony is that to which I would more especially direct your attention, and you must not be alarmed at the point at which I am desirous you should aim.

We are told of our ancestors, three centuries ago, that music entered into a polite education as an indispensable accomplishment.

Peacham says, in his description of a *complete gentleman*, "It is necessary that he should be able to sing his part sure and at first sight;" and Philomathes, in Morley's Introduction to Music, (published in 1597,) relating what occurred at an entertainment to which he was invited, says, "Supper being ended, and music-books, according to custom, being brought to table, the mistress of the house presented me with a part, earnestly entreating me to sing; but when, after many excuses, I protested, unfeignedly, that I could not, every one began to wonder; yea, some whispered to others, demanding how I was brought up."

At the period to which I allude, vocal harmony was chiefly cultivated in England, and every one who had pretensions to the manners of good society, was supposed capable of participating in it.

I am anxious, to a certain degree, that you should follow this example, for I am assured you will find such study a source of great family pleasure. "I know nothing," said one of the members of Legh Richmond's circle, "which I remember with more pleasure, than the hours we have spent together in domestic music: I shall never regret the time I have given to music, when

I consider its tendency to attach us to our delightful home."

I would again request you, my young friends, here to pause and examine yourselves, as to what has been the aim with which you have cultivated drawing or music. I entreat you to give me your earnest attention, while I bring before you those motives which, I fear, actuate many in their pursuit of accomplishments. While so doing, I ask you to examine yourselves, whether these have not prevailed, to a greater or less degree, in your own minds; and, if conscience answer in the affirmative, let me beseech you not to rest, until, by the enlightening influences of God's Holy Spirit, you are brought to feel how low and inferior are such aims!

Hannah More remarks, that "if we were required to condense the reigning system of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphorism, it might be comprised in this short sentence,—'To allure, and to shine.'" If this were applicable at the time it was written, it is doubly so in the present day, when the sums expended and the time lavished upon accomplishments are in many cases enormous.

I would now ask you again, is it for the gratification of the dear home circle that you have, with comparative earnestness, devoted yourselves to the

pursuit of accomplishments? or is it with the vain and selfish purpose of exciting admiration, and perhaps envy, in the minds of the worldly and the less favoured multitude? Alas, that such should be the case! that you should thus forget the sacred duties and true end of life! that you should "allow yourselves to be educated for a crowd, forgetting that you are to live at home, for the world, and not for yourselves; for show, and not for use; for time, and not for eternity!"

There are two serious and alarming springs of action which operate on the youthful mind. The one is vanity, and the other is selfishness. Opposed as these are to the mind and will of our blessed Saviour, it is not surprising if they are found in active exercise in the mind of the unregenerate and worldly-minded person; and when education is not conducted upon right principles, every pursuit or study tends to foster these enemies to Christian simplicity. They mingle not only with our faults, but are often also the spring of what to others may appear our best actions.

Hannah More says, "they are, with respect to other vices, what feeling is in regard to the other senses, not confined in their operation to the eye, or the ear, or any single organ, but are diffused through the whole being; alive in every part; awakened and communicated by the slightest touch."

This is, perhaps, to you a startling fact, my beloved readers, yet it is nevertheless true that these evil passions exist, and that with overwhelming power in the heart of many a young person, who in the eye of the world is amiable and good. It is only when we are led to self-examination, when we trace the motives of each action to its own source, that we become aware how fearful the enemies are which retain possession of our hearts.

In one of Jane Taylor's poems, she describes, with simplicity and truth, the insidious nature of one of these secret foes :—

“Pride, ugly pride, sometimes is seen
In haughty looks and lofty mien ;
But often it is found that pride
Loves deep within the heart to hide ;
And while the looks are mild and fair,
It sits and works its mischief there.”

You have indeed grievously failed in your aim if gratified vanity and the indulgence of a refined selfishness have been the ultimatum of your wishes.*

* The education which hallows existence.—“A man is not to be considered as educated because some years of his life have been spent in acquiring a certain proficiency in the languages, in the history and geography of Greece and Rome, and their colonies, or in bestowing a transient attention on the principles of mathematics and natural philosophy ; nor is a woman to be considered as educated because she can execute a difficult piece of music in a brilliant style, or speak French, German, or Italian with fluency. Such attainments require

I might say much more upon this subject, but I must now proceed to show you that the Christian contemplates these things but as means to an end.

I have sought to bring before you the value of the cultivation of taste, and some attention to the fine arts; I would now entreat you to remember that it must only be in entire subordination to the one great end of life. "Nothing seems important to me," writes a devoted servant of God, "but in so far as it is connected with religion. The end, *cui bono*, enters into my view of everything; even

little more than mere mechanical recollection. The lowest of all the cerebral faculties, or the rapid transmission of an impulse from the sensitive optic nerve to those of the arms and fingers, is nothing better than the instinctive movement of the animal; neither can the strung-up opinions of others, or the accustoming the tongue to the idioms of other languages, be properly termed an act of thought; for, in such cases, the capacity of combining ideas, of weighing and judging ere a course of action is adopted, remain even less exercised than in those who, though they are turned into the world with the mind, as it were, a *tabula rosa*, to receive any impression, and too frequently a bad one, yet amid the difficulty and sufferings of poverty, sometimes learn to think. It is from the depths of man's interior life that he must draw what separates him from the truth, and hallows his animal existence; and learning is no further valuable than as it gives a quantity of raw material, to be separated and worked up in the intellectual laboratory, till it comes forth as new in form, and as increased in value, as the porcelain vase, which entered the manufactory in the shape of metallic salts, clay, and sand."

the highest acts of intellect become criminal trifling when they occupy too much of the time of a mortal creature. If the mind cannot feel and treat mathematics and music, and all such things, as trifles, it has been seduced and enslaved. Brainard, Grimshaw, and Fletcher were *men*. Most of us are dwarfs."

To become absorbed in the pleasures derived from the fine arts—thus to lose your hold of the great principle which should guide you through life—would be shipwreck on a most dangerous shore. Believing, as I do, that these refined pleasures are given for our enjoyment, I would still say, far better would it be for you to remain ignorant of the gratification derived from these things, than that you should be led away from the service of your Creator by a devotion to the creature.

Cecil has guarded us against undue attachment to these intellectual pleasures in the following words: "There must be measure and proportion in our attention to the arts and sciences. These were the very idols of the heathen world; and what are they who now follow them with an idolatrous eagerness, but like children who are charmed with the sparkling of a rocket, and yet see nothing in the sun?"

There is one more subject of deep importance connected with too great a devotion to the fine arts,

to which I must earnestly entreat your serious attention. I have spoken of the “science of æsthetics,” and you will remember the definition given of it. In the present day, it is necessary to show you one great danger to which you will be exposed, if you do not ever keep in view the simplicity of Gospel truth. It has been well observed, “It is to be feared that there are not a few persons, who, from the want of that principle of Christian stability, ‘a sound judgment in all things,’ are liable to be turned aside in proportion as circumstances may arise to favour this course, into the paths of inviting and plausible error. And it is a characteristic feature of modern conversions to Popery, that they have arisen not so much from those sordid and inferior motives which may be expected to prevail, from time to time, with isolated *individuals*, but from higher impulses, which are adapted to work upon *whole classes of men*, according to some distinct bias or turn of mind, or some peculiar rank or position in society.” *

The same author, in speaking of the different elements which are at work, mentions the æsthetic element, or the influence of taste, as one of the most subtle and extensive operation. “Towards the latter end of the last century, there sprang up on the Continent a romantic, or rather imaginative,

* Rev. J. E. Riddle.

school of poetry and art, which has been not a little productive of conversions in favour of Popery. This school, the opposite of the philosophic, or school of pure reason, falsely so called, is distinguished by its love of the mysterious and marvellous, its fondness for fiction and adventure; and consequently, by its sympathy with deeds of chivalry, with the spirit of pilgrimage and crusade, the *splendour of superb architecture, the charms of music and painting*, and many of the ecclesiastical doings and institutions of the middle ages, not even to the exclusion of lying miracles and the legends of pretended saints. This revival of mediæval taste *has become one dangerous pathway to Rome*. It was trodden, for example, by that well-known and accomplished scholar, Frederick Schlegel, who professed his adherence to the Romish Church, at Vienna, in the year 1808. We may observe the danger of cultivating the mental taste by studying ancient or mediæval models, without sufficient religious knowledge and *the influence of divine grace in enlightening the mind and guiding it into all truth*, as with Schlegel and others."

Let me then entreat you, my dear readers, to seek guidance from above in all your studies, and strength that you may be enabled to continue stedfast unto the end.

I cannot conclude this subject without one word

of affectionate advice to those who may have the dangerous idea that talent or genius will ever prove an excuse at the bar of God for neglect of earnestness in religious duty. "To whom much is given, much will be required." Whatever may be our talents, we shall be judged according to our use or abuse of them. May you, my beloved young friends, be enabled to consecrate all you possess to the service of God.

One of my favourite authors, Hannah More, has so well expressed the sentiment with which I would close this chapter, that I shall do so in her words.

"Madame Necker has said, 'Le Juge supreme sera clement envers le genie:' I humbly conceive this is a dangerous sentiment. Voltaire, Rousseau, Bolingbroke, Lord Byron, and a hundred others, would be happy to take shelter for the use to which they have applied their talents under the wing of so admirable a woman as Madame Necker. I am a passionate admirer of whatever is beautiful in nature or exquisite in art. These are the gifts of God, but no part of his essence; they proceed from God's goodness, and should kindle our gratitude to Him: but I cannot conceive that the most enchanting beauties of nature, or the most splendid productions of the fine arts, have any necessary connexion with religion. You will observe, that

I mean the religion of Christ, not that of Plato; the religion of reality, and not of the beau-ideal. Adam sinned in a garden, too beautiful for us to have any conception of it. The Israelites selected fair groves and pleasant mountains for the peculiar scenes of their idolatry. The most exquisite pictures and statues have been produced in those parts of Europe where pure religion has made the least progress. These decorate religion, but they neither produce nor advance it. They are the enjoyments and refreshments of life, and very compatible with true religion, but they make no part of religion. Athens was at once the most learned and the most polished city in the world; so devoted to the fine arts, that it is said to have contained more statues than men; yet in this eloquent city, the eloquent apostle's preaching made but one proselyte in the whole Areopagus.

"Though I have already said too much, I cannot help adding a word on what appears to me to be the distinctive character of Christianity. I mean a deep and abiding sense in the heart of our fallen nature; of our actual and personal sinfulness; of our lost state, but for the redemption wrought for us by Jesus Christ; and of our universal necessity of a change of heart; and the conviction that this change can only be effected by the influence of the Holy Spirit. This is not a splendid, but it is a

saving religion ; it is humbling now, that it may be elevating hereafter. It appears to me also, that the requisition which the Christian religion makes on the most highly gifted, as well as of the most meanly endowed, is, that after the loftiest and most successful exercise of the most brilliant talents, the favoured possessor should lay his talents and himself at the foot of the cross, with the same deep abasement and self-renunciation as his more illiterate neighbour, and this from a conviction of who it is that hath made them to differ."

CHAPTER VI.

AN EARNEST LIFE THE ONLY PREPARATION FOR A FUTURE
STATE—PRESENT HAPPINESS OF THE EARNEST CHRIS-
TIAN—FUTURE BLESSEDNESS.

"COME, let us anew our journey pursue,
 Roll round with the year,
 And never stand still till the Master appear.

His adorable will let us gladly fulfil,
 And our talents improve,
 By the patience of hope and the labour of love.

Oh, that each in the day of His coming may say,
 'I have fought my way through ;
 I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do !'

Oh, that each from his Lord may receive the glad word,
 'Well, and faithfully done ;
 Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne !'"

"Now, is the constant syllable ticking from the clock of time ;
 Now, is the watchword of the wise. Now, is on the banner
 of the prudent.

Cherish thy to-day, and prize it well, or ever it be gulphed
 into the past ;

Husband it, for who can promise if it shall have a morrow ?
 Behold, thou art—it is enough ; that present care be thine ;
 Leave thou the past to thy Redeemer, entrust the future to
 thy Friend ;

But for to-day, child of man, tend thou charily the minutes,
 The harvest of thy yesterday, the seed-corn of thy morrow.
 Last night died its day ; and the deeds thereof were judged."

Proverbial Philosophy.

CHAPTER VI.

THE conviction of the soul's immortality is one that appears to be often felt with an overwhelming force at the approach of death. Then it is that the unprepared spirit trembles to launch into the dark unknown, and stands shivering on the brink of eternity. "I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist hereafter," was the language of one of earth's most gifted, but unhappy sons. The daring Infidel, who has mocked at the power of his Creator during his life, shrinks aghast from the awful prospect of the Divine vengeance, and, too late, looks back with anguish and remorse. "Can any one," asks Bishop Hall, "be so infatuated, as to think it fit to pass his whole life in neglect of that Almighty Being to whom at last he will be obliged to resort as his only refuge and support?"

We may answer this question by referring to the lives of those who have been exclusively engaged in worldly pursuits, to the neglect of their souls' eternal interests. We approach the bed of death; we mark the hopeless despair—the accents of

anguish ; and, as we contemplate the awful spectacle, a voice sounds in our ears with solemn warning, and portentous earnestness, “ Be ye also ready, for in such a day as ye think not the Son of man cometh ! ”

If we would spare ourselves the experience of this *bitter woe*, this *irremediable sorrow*, we must now commence our journey to the heavenly Jerusalem. “ So walk,” writes an old divine, “ that the parting day may be sweet.” And if we would have our dying hour one of peace and holy joy, we must see to it that our preparation for it is begun before it is too late.

This subject is one also most intimately connected, my beloved readers, with your present position, and ought to be associated with every employment of your lives. A pious author remarks, “ To train and prepare the soul for its eternal destiny, is the proper business and end of education. There are subordinate ends which may be desired, and means of the same character which may be employed in their attainments: whatever we teach or do ought to have a bearing on another condition of being, and be made subservient to its interests.”

“ Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” were the words of Him who spake as never man yet spake; and it will be my aim, in this closing chapter, to show you, by the example

of many of God's faithful and devoted servants, how constantly attention to the precept is accompanied by a fulfilment of the promise annexed to it—"And all these things shall be added unto you."

Before we proceed to that most delightful and encouraging part of my subject, it will be well, perhaps, for us to dwell for a short time upon the opposite character and the attendant consequences. "Were we called upon," remarks Robert Hall, "to name the object under the sun which excites the deepest commiseration in the heart of Christian sensibility, which includes in itself the most affecting incongruities, which contains the sum and substance of real human misery, we should not hesitate to say, an irreligious old age."

Perchance, my beloved young friends, you shrink from the possibility of your ever possessing such a character. You have every intention and desire to become God's servants at a future time : *at the more convenient season.* You may wish yet a little longer to enjoy the pleasures of sense ; you still cling to the delusive joys, the fleeting vanities of earth ; but you fully purpose, before old age comes over you, to act a different part. Alas ! to how many has this dangerous error proved fatal ! the *convenient season* has never arrived. Year after year has passed on, bearing the careless sinner nearer and nearer to the hour when the last account

must be rendered, till at length the final decree goes forth, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Think not that I place this matter in too strong a light before you; many and striking are the facts which confirm the awful danger of delay or forgetfulness of God. I will bring one example, drawn from the dying scene of Hoffman, a German writer of high talents, but whose powers of mind and body were debased by the use to which he employed them.

A short time before his departure, when some friends were around him, one remarked, "that life was not the highest good." Hoffman interrupted him with startling eagerness; "No, no! life, only life! on any condition whatsoever!" After he had lost all sensation, he thought himself better, but the physician knew that he was dying. He at last called his wife to his bedside, and requested her to place his motionless hands together; then, as he raised them to heaven, she heard him say, "We must then think of God also!" "More sorrowful words than these," writes his biographer, "have seldom fallen from the lips of man. Shortly after this they turned his face to the wall, and he died."

Contrast this, my beloved reader, with the dying words of an eminent servant of God:—"The best of all is," said the expiring saint, "that God is with us."

But it is not only the dissipated or the immoral character who must be considered as being in a dangerous state. There are many persons who may to the world appear virtuous and good, who are yet living at a distance from God, and are equally the objects of his righteous displeasure.

Affecting instances of the danger of lukewarmness and half-heartedness in religion are daily brought before our notice. A Christian minister relates, "I was called to visit a death-bed. I recognised a constant hearer, and began to talk to him : 'Stop, sir,' said the dying man, 'go and tell the congregation you have seen one who is going to hell, because he had no heart in religion.' I quitted the bed of horror," said Mr. C——, "but not without hope: conviction is the road to conversion, and I cannot tell the end."

The solemn address to the Angel of the Church at Laodicea,* "I know thy works, that thou art

* "The address to each Church commences with the same solemn assurance of his intimate acquaintance with its spiritual condition—'I know thy works.' He declares that He is ever looking upon his Churches, not as we look from a distance, but with an eye immediately fixed upon each; not with a cursory or general glance, but with a close and minute inspection into the state of every heart, so that his knowledge of each member is as perfect as his knowledge of the entire Church, and is derived from its proper source, the real facts of every case being subjected to that all-searching eye, which is represented by a flame of fire. (Chap. ii. 18.) This is

neither cold nor hot."—"Because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth," may bring to our minds and consciences a most important lesson, and one that should not fail deeply to impress our hearts. It is not sufficient that we are impressed with the importance of a life devoted to the service of God; it is imperative upon us that we rise to the fulfilment of its requirements, and that we rest not satisfied in anything short of it.

expressed with still more explicitness, in his address to the Church of Thyatira, to which he says, 'All the churches—not the world merely, but the churches—shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.' This asserts, not only his power or his right, but his occupation; He is ever thus engaged; his eyes are always running to and fro through every Church. His attention is minute and specific—it is not the Church collectively, but the Church in its individual members, that is the subject of his scrutiny.

"How anxiously and how inquisitively should each Church say, 'What does He see in us?' and each member say, 'What does He see in me?' Can anything be a stronger incitement to diligence, to earnestness, to entire self-consecration, than the thought that we are 'Ever in the great Taskmaster's eye?' Over each one of us continually rolls the thrilling and solemn announcement, 'I know thy works!' Could we but set the Lord always before us; could we but realize Him as our right hand; could we but even look up to Him as present, though invisible, saying to Him, 'Thou, God, seest me,' should we need anything more to stir us up to the most intense devotedness?"—*James's Earnest Church.*

"Whatever below God," observes Cecil, "is the object of our love, will, at some time or other, be the matter of our sorrow." And the truth of this is seen in the varied and daily experience of those who set their hearts on objects of earthly love, and content themselves with a half surrender of that which they owe to their Creator. Not so is it with the earnest Christian; he may adopt the language of old Herbert, and say—

"Quitting with daily labour, all my pleasure,
To gain at harvest an eternal treasure."

His heart's best affections are devoted to the service of his God, and he presses ever onward to the mark of the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We may well be astonished at the careless negligence of many as to their future state, and wonder at the blindness that leads them thus to trifle with their soul's best interests. An old divine speaks of such characters, as "those who live in this world as though it were never to have an end; and for the next, as though it were never to have a beginning."

Archbishop Leighton has quaintly said, "Archimedes was not singular in his fate; but a great part of mankind die unexpectedly, while they are poring over the figures they have described in the sand."

What then is the preparation which is necessary for the last hour ? Where shall we find an antidote to the sting of death, to the triumphs of the grave ? We find, from the record of death-bed scenes, that many an humble Christian has been enabled to rejoice in the hour of nature's dissolution, and has experienced the support and consolations of Divine grace.

It is the Christian character alone that can impart this confidence and superiority to the fear of death. The proper estimate of the two characters is shown us in the precept and example of many earnest-minded persons.

Hear, my dear readers, the judgment of the excellent Wilberforce on this subject, as related to us by Sir Fowell Buxton : "Wilberforce dined with me on Tuesday last, and was quite delightful. He gave us a long account of his early life and friends, and said one thing which has much stuck to me. I asked him who was the greatest man he ever knew ? He said, 'Out of all comparison, Pitt !' but he added, 'I never think of his superiority without reflecting, that he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.'"

How different is the standard by which this earnest-minded Christian formed his judgment to that of the worldly-minded man ! With one, God's

revealed and unerring word, which standeth fast for ever and ever ! with the other, the false and dangerous maxims of the world !

I have mentioned to you the cases of those who have either entirely neglected religion, or have paid only a lukewarm and cold attention to its holy precepts. It is a satisfaction to find the testimony given by the convictions of right-minded persons to its true value. My limited space only permits me to place before you the evidence of some few of those who have stood high in the ranks of our earnest characters.

The excellent and distinguished nobleman, who for thirty years occupied the honourable post of President of the British and Foreign Bible Society, may well be mentioned in connexion with this part of my subject. I refer to the venerable Lord Teignmouth.

On one occasion, when illness had prevented his attending the anniversary of the Society, he called afterwards on the Rev. Rowland Hill. "Oh, Mr. Hill," said he, "in a few years more, into what insignificance will the followers of this world's ambitious projects sink, compared with the true greatness of the simple servant of Christ, or missionary to the heathen, who in defiance of all reproach, has spent his devoted life in spreading the Gospel ! "

I may mention that the last moments of this aged servant of Christ were a beautiful exemplification of the power of the Christian principle he had professed.

It is not only the true servant of Christ who thus speaks ; with strange inconsistency, we sometimes find the worldly man anxious that at least his children should possess the consolations of religion.

I have read that “a professor in one of the German Universities, whose unconcern for religion in general was notorious, was not less remarkable for the care which he took in the religious instruction of his children. One of his friends, astonished at his inconsistency, and asking him the reason of this conduct, was told in reply, ‘It is because I wish my children may enjoy more peace of mind, and more content in this life, than has ever fallen to my lot, and this they can only obtain by possessing more faith than myself.’”

It is the language of inspiration that, “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom,” and when this becomes a filial fear, then is it that you will know what is the blessedness of the service of God. Let me now endeavour to place before you the first principles of this fear.

“The foundation of all true religion,” says a pious writer, “is the grand truth of the unity of God, of the universal agency of one and the same

great Being in all events and things ; and this unity is not practically realized, but in proportion as we see God in all things, and all things in God."

" He only," remarks Bishop Taylor, " to whom all things are One, who draweth all things to One, and seeth all things in One, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit." *

It is the great principle of referring everything to God, as the Supreme Good, that I seek to see in

* " Whenever we contemplate powers at work in nature, or in Providence, or in grace, which we neglect to refer up to the one undivided Source of life, we are resting in something below God, and breaking into fragments his unity. Nay, when we contemplate God too distinctly under different aspects, as sometimes the God of nature, and sometimes of providence, and sometimes of grace, we are going far to make this same most dangerous separation. We must have an eye for all his revelations of himself, and our total impression of his character must be collected and compounded from them all. Each is imperfect taken by itself, but each contributes something to the grand and perfect whole. Let the man of observation, and the man of experiment, and the man of science, and the man of history, and the man of the Bible, admire, each one in his particular sphere, the marvellous revelations of Divine Power, and wisdom, and goodness. But let the man of large devotedness, standing in the centre of a sphere which circumscribes them all, trace up by faith (wherever sight may fail him) all these several rays of glory into that stupendous Being, who is power, and wisdom, and goodness, all in one, and whom he nevertheless (amazing thought!) can call his Father and his Friend."—*Griffith's Spiritual Life.*

active and constant operation in your hearts, my beloved readers. I desire that you should *ever* realize the presence of your God; that you should refer all things to his will, devote to his service all the powers of your body, soul, and spirit. I am anxious that you should not only have the name, but that you should be truly God's children, walking in the light of his reconciled countenance, and rejoicing in the hope of future blessedness: but in order to do this, you must be decided in your determination to be an earnest Christian. It is not the wavering, the undecided, who can experience the happiness of being led by the Spirit of God. It is not to the half-hearted Christian that are vouchsafed the consolations which are the portion of God's dear children.

A Christian writer has said, "Drink deep, or taste not, is a direction fully as applicable to religion, if we would find it a source of pleasure, as it is to knowledge. A little religion is, it must be confessed, apt to make men gloomy, as a little knowledge is to render them vain; hence the unjust imputation often brought upon religion by those whose degree of religion is just sufficient, by condemning their course of conduct, to render them uneasy enough merely to impair the sweetness of the pleasures of sin, and not enough to compensate for the relinquishment of them by its own peculiar

comforts. Thus these men bring up, as it were, an ill report of that land of promise, which in truth abounds with whatever in our own journey through life can best refresh and strengthen us."

The testimony of God's servants is most abundant and striking, as to the happiness of a life spent in his service; and having once experienced this blessedness, nothing less can satisfy them. From age to age we can trace the same spirit. Hear the aspirations of the devout St. Bernard :—"Nothing, Lord, that is Thine can suffice me without thyself, nor can anything that is mine without myself be pleasing to Thee." "I find," writes Baxter, "that Thou, and Thou alone, art the resting-place of my soul. Upon the holy altar erected by thy Son, and by his hands and his mediation, I humbly devote and offer to Thee this heart. It loves to love Thee ; it seeks, it craves no greater blessedness than perfect, endless, mutual love. It is vowed to Thee, even to Thee alone, and will never take up with shadows more!"

Let me give you the testimony left us by Coleridge, one of the most thinking men of his day. These are his words in the decline of life :— "I have known what the enjoyments and advantages of this life are, and what the more refined pleasures which learning and intellectual power can bestow ; and with all the experience that

threescore years can give, I now, on the eve of my departure, declare to you (and earnestly pray that you may hereafter live and act on the conviction), that health is a great blessing, competence obtained by honourable industry a great blessing; and a great blessing it is to have kind, faithful, and loving friends and relatives; but that the greatest of all blessings, as it is the most ennobling of all privileges, is to be indeed a Christian." *

Another eminent man, distinguished for his unwearied zeal in behalf of the practice and doctrines of Christianity, Lavater, pastor of the church of St. Peter, at Zurich, in Switzerland, has given us this interesting witness to the satisfaction afforded by the religion of Christ:—"Believe me, I speak it deliberately, and with full conviction; I have enjoyed many of the comforts of life, none of which I wish to esteem lightly: often have I been charmed with the beauties of nature, and refreshed with her bountiful gifts; I have spent many an hour in sweet meditation, and in reading the most valuable productions of the wisest men; I have often been delighted with the conversation of ingenious, sensible, and exalted characters; my eyes have been powerfully attracted by the finest productions of human art, and my ears by enchanting melodies. I have found pleasure when calling into

* Letters to his Godchild.

activity the powers of my own mind ; when residing in my own native land, or travelling through foreign parts ; when surrounded by large and splendid companies ; still more, when moving in the small, endearing circle of my own family ; yet to speak the truth before God, who is my Judge, I must confess, I know not any joy that is so dear to me, that so fully satisfies the inmost desires of my mind, that so enlivens, refines, and elevates my whole nature, as that which I derive from religion ; from faith in God, as One who not only is the Parent of men, but has condescended as a brother, to clothe himself with our nature. Nothing affords me greater delight than a solid hope that I partake of his favours, and rely on his never-failing support and protection. He, who has been so often my hope, my refuge, my confidence, when I stood upon the brink of an abyss, where I could not move one step forward—He, who in answer to my prayer has helped me when every prospect of help vanished ; that God who has safely conducted me, not merely through flowery paths, but likewise across precipices and burning sands—may this God be thy God, thy refuge, and thy comfort, as He has been mine.”

But it will be, perhaps, well, if we examine closer into the elements of this happiness. To feel that we are truly fulfilling the end of our existence;

that the glory of God is our one great aim ; that we are reconciled to our Heavenly Father through the blood of his dear Son ; that death will but bear us into the more immediate presence of the Master we have served on earth—such are the thoughts and convictions which constitute the present happiness of the earnest Christian. In the midst of the infirmities of his fallen nature, and the knowledge he possesses of his utter unworthiness, he feels that he can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and rejoice in the consciousness that to Him is known the one desire, the single aim of all his actions.

His language is, “For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself ; for whether we live we live unto the Lord, and whether we die we die unto the Lord ; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.”

He takes to himself the precept of the inspired apostle : “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God ;” and while others are crying, “Who will show us any good ?” his constant prayer is, “Lord, lift up Thou the light of Thy countenance upon me.” Instead of asking, “How little can I do for the advancement of my Master’s cause ?—how many of the pleasures of the world may I retain—how far may I go in this or that compliance to worldly custom or fashion ?” —he realizes the glowing language of the apostle :

“ Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

Animated with a spirit of ardent love to his Saviour, those things which were once dear to him he now rejects, because they are not consistent with the revealed will of his Heavenly Father. “ He rejoices in a hope full of immortality,” thus beautifully expressed by Archbishop Leighton :—

“ A living hope, living in death itself. The world dares say no more for its device than ‘ *Dum spiro spero*,’ (whilst I breathe I hope); but the children of God can add, by virtue of this living hope, ‘ *Dum expiro spero*’ (whilst I expire I hope).”

The peace he enjoys is not dependent upon the transitive and fleeting vanities of earth. In relinquishing the pursuit of these, he has obtained in their place a foretaste of those pleasures which are at God’s right hand for evermore.

Let us first mark, my beloved readers, the reality of the change which takes place, when the soul of man is turned from following dumb idols to serve the living God.

The devoted Martyn thus describes his own experience :—“ Let me praise God for having turned me from a life of woe, to the enjoyment of peace and hope. The work is real. I can no more doubt it than I can doubt my existence ; the whole

current of my desires is altered ; I am walking quite another way, though I am necessarily stumbling in that way."

He experiences the fulfilment of the promises—“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.” “To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God ?”

Being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and springing from this faith, is the Christian devotedness of which I have before spoken to you. One of the first features in this Christian course will be, that he will deny worldly lusts and pleasures : he will give up all worldly associates.

Formerly the pleasures of the world were lovely in his eyes ; but when once this change is wrought in him, he will be enabled to cast them aside. Thus we read of another earnest Christian character, that “The amusements of a gay world, which had formerly been very attractive to him, no

longer presented any charms to his heart ; he felt a distaste for them, which was strengthened as his more vivid conceptions of the value of the soul enabled him more clearly to perceive their vanity ; and it became a cause of gratitude in his heart, that God had graciously preserved him from being pleased with such vanities. ‘Once,’ he remarks, ‘I was fond of them, but I am now enabled to perceive their sinfulness.’”*

Perhaps, my beloved readers, there may be some of you who have been accustomed to indulge in these pleasures, these worldly vanities, without consideration as to the question of their being consistent or inconsistent with the earnest character. I would speak to you upon this subject with all tenderness ; but I cannot pass it by without placing one or two considerations before you. My object in addressing this little volume to you, is to urge you to the importance of decision, with reference to the one thing needful. I have endeavoured to show you in the Hints contained in the foregoing pages, that it is essential that all you think, say, or do, should have a bearing upon the great end of life ; viz., to glorify God. Here, then, is a plain rule to which you may bring every question, whether it

* Memorial of the late J— F—, printed for private circulation only.

concerns your studies, employments, or amusements. Do not think I am requiring too much in giving you the unerring standard of the Word of God, as that by which we must judge our own actions. "Know ye not," says this sure and certain guide, "that the friendship of the world is enmity to God? whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased man, I should not be the servant of Christ." "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

After the Word of God, the combined precept and example of earnest-minded Christians is a valuable assistance to the young and inexperienced, in forming a correct estimate of that which is lawful or expedient. Let me ask you, my dear readers, if you cannot here apply the result of your own observation. Is it in the crowded ball-room, the theatre, or the opera, that you will meet those who belong to this character? No; "piety," as an excellent author has observed, "looks round in vain in these scenes for anything congenial to her

nature ;” and he who has grace given him to be decided in religion, will not hesitate to evidence by his conduct, that he is no longer of the world.*

Let me, my beloved readers, refer you to the biography of the earnest-minded in every age, and you will there find their practice, with regard to worldly conformity, coinciding with the plain directions taken from God’s holy Word. You may and will see instances of inconsistency, but this will not militate against the general practice and opinions of the decided Christian. One most valuable work I would especially recommend to your attentive

* “Religion deters not from the lawful delights which are taken in natural things, but teaches the moderate and regular use of them, which is far sweeter; for things lawful in themselves, are, in their excess, sinful, and so prove bitterness in the end. And, if in some cases it requires the forsaking of lawful enjoyment, as of pleasure, or profit, or honour, for God and for his glory, it is generous, and more truly delightful to deny things for this reason, than to enjoy them. The delights and pleasures of sin, religion indeed banishes, but it is to change them for joy that is unspeakably beyond them. It calls men from sordid and base delights, to those that are pure delights indeed. It calls to men, ‘Drink ye no longer of the cistern; here see the crystal streams of a living fountain!’ There is a delight in the very despising of sinful delights, as that, in comparison with them, the other deserves not the name; to have such spiritual joy as shall end in eternal joy; it is a wonder we hasten not to choose this joy, but it is, indeed, because we believe not.”—*Archbishop Leighton.*

perusal, "The Life of Mary Jane Graham," by the Rev. Charles Bridges. Endowed with high intellectual powers, it was the constant aim of this young person to consecrate them to her Master's service, and her writings still remain to assist and encourage the earnest seeker.

In a letter to a young friend, who had asked her opinion respecting worldly pleasures and amusements, she thus writes: "I fear lest you should think me strict and gloomy, if I tell you all I think; but I will tell you, since you desire it, and I know that God is both able and willing to give you joys so much superior to every worldly amusement, that you will wonder you could ever give them a thought. I must say, then, that the world and worldly amusements appear to me quite inconsistent with the character of a real Christian; and that we can never enjoy happy converse with God till we give them up.

"The Christian is described in the Scriptures as the 'temple of the living God.' Now, where the holy God takes up his abode, surely that heart must be sanctified and set apart from every common use, wholly devoted to his service. But can God and the world reign in the same heart, or, as it were, reign by turns? Shall we admit the God of glory in the morning, and shut Him out in the evening, while we are going to a ball or a play?—

for we may be well assured, He will not go with us there. The spirit of the world, which reigns in such places, is quite opposite to His spirit ; and ‘the friendship of the world,’ which is there sought, ‘is enmity with God.’ I know this would be called uncharitable, but I do not wish to be more charitable than the Bible. And surely experience proves it to be true ; for go into any fashionable assembly whatever, and there begin to speak of these things of which we ought to talk, ‘when we are sitting in the house and when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise up ;’ and see if politeness itself can repress a smile at your strange and unwarrantable impertinence, in forcing the attention of the company to subjects which they are met for the very purpose of forgetting. No, my dear friend, that cannot be a proper place for a Christian, where religion is the thing that must not be named ; and where even something in our hearts will tell us, that such subjects are out of place. Neither can you say, your own heart may be as well employed there as elsewhere.

* * * *

Temptations enough will come to us ; let us not go to them. Besides, it seems to be mocking our Father, which is in heaven, to say one hour, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ when we have coolly made up our minds to rush into it the next. From the

evil of such a temptation can we hope that He will deliver us ? Let me draw your attention to the important precept of our Lord : ‘Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding ; that when He cometh and knocketh they may open to Him immediately.’ Now, dear, I am sure you would not choose that your Lord should come for you, while engaged in worldly amusements ; nor would you feel that He found you watching, nor would you be ready to open immediately ; but would rather ask time to collect your scattered thoughts, and trim your wasted lamp.

* * * *

“ You ask me, ‘ How are we to wean our hearts from the world ? ’ I know no answer than that which Scripture gives. A believing view of Jesus must make the world look dark and insignificant ; and whenever we begin to love it too much, we have only to apply to Him who has said to us, ‘ Be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.’ I have now but one way :—I try to take my heart to Jesus, believing that victory is already mine for His sake. Lord, thou hast promised that sin shall not have dominion over me. Thou hast said, that ‘ every one that is born of Thee overcometh the world.’ Thou hast given thyself for my sins, that Thou

mightest deliver me from this present world ; and wilt Thou now leave me to be taken captive by this evil world ? Cast yourself then, without fear, upon the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus. The more worldly and wicked you feel yourself to be, the more He is concerned to show you His power and faithfulness, in saving you from your worldliness and wickedness."

I have been led to give the above lengthened extract for the benefit of two classes of my youthful readers—those who see religion to be a desirable possession, and are anxious to know the path of duty, that they may walk therein ; and for those who have perhaps indulged in these things without reflection.

To the first I would say, if you are seeking to be decided to give yourselves up to the service of God —decision early in these subjects will be an important part of the course of conduct marked out for you : it will also be of the greatest possible assistance. Perhaps you dread the reproach of the world ; oh, rather dread the danger of indecision, of turning from a plain command for the cross that is in it ! Unless you are enabled by God's grace to bear this reproach, to own your Master before your fellow-creatures, how can you hope that He will own you before an assembled world ? Shall I tell you of one who thus shrunk from reproach, and

who afterwards, forsaken by the God he had thus dishonoured, died under the heaviest reproach and shame ?

The Rev. Henry Venn thus gives a word of admonition in connexion with this subject : "Remember Dr. Dodd ! I myself heard him tell his own flock, whom he was lecturing in his house, 'that he was obliged to give up that method of helping their souls, because it exposed him to so much reproach.' He gave it up, and fell from one compliance to another with his corrupt nature ; and under what reproach did he die ? Oh ! be afraid of nothing more than the detestable cowardice of a selfish and unbelieving heart."

Thus is it that a fear of incurring the reproach or contempt of the world will often prove a snare to the wavering and undecided. It may not lead you, my beloved young friends, to such an outward reproach as the unhappy man above named experienced, but its consequences may ultimately be quite as fatal ; and, oh ! let it be as a beacon to warn you against striking upon such dangerous quicksands as those which were the cause of his ruin.

To those of my readers who have thoughtlessly pursued worldly gratification and amusement, and who have not hitherto been accustomed to realize the principle of doing all to the glory of God, I

would say, with deep feeling of affectionate interest, Permit me to entreat you, before you again enter into these things, to apply to them the rule which I have often before given you in the course of this little work. Ask yourselves, before you set about any study or employment, or enter into any company, "Am I doing this to the glory of my God? Is it my sole, or at least, my principal motive? Can I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus? Can I boldly say—it is such an action as He would approve of? and can I look up unto Him all the time I am doing it, for his sanction and blessing?" If you can answer this question satisfactorily, the action, whatever it may be, *must* be right, and there can be no danger attending the performance of it. If, on the contrary, your mind recoils from ever asking such a question, be assured that there is something wrong in it, and that you would do well to give it up.

"It is a hard lesson to our carnal hearts, but one which the love of Jesus can make easy to us—that from the moment we take refuge at the cross of Jesus, and 'are washed from our sins in His blood,' from that happy moment we are 'no longer our own,' and must make it our own business to 'glorify God in our body and spirit, which are God's.'

"This seems to me the great and marked dis-

tinction between the Christian and the worldling—the one lives to himself, the other to ‘Him who died and rose again.’ Will not this rule give us a very different view of our duty as to worldly company and employments from any that worldly wisdom or policy can give us ?” *

It is not my intention to dwell longer upon these subjects: I have been led to mention them because I felt it essential to the right performance of my duty.† I am quite aware that those who have experienced the sweetness of a Saviour’s love will not be ever likely to find pleasure in the society or pursuits of those who live without God in the world. They will not ask, “In becoming a Christian, how small a sacrifice need I make of my worldly associates and amusements?” but their prayer will be, “Show me the way wherein I should walk.” And when once the path of duty is marked out, the willing spirit will immediately proceed in it.

It will be my happiness now, my beloved readers,

* Miss Graham.

† There are many and different opinions as to the physical training required by the young, and to how great a degree dancing, as one means to this end, is allowable. As an act it is doubtless not sinful; but the earnest Christian will shrink from its indulgence when he finds the character of the circles in which it is habitually carried on:—there can be no indecision upon the subject of worldly associates, whatever there may be as to the act of dancing itself.

to show you some of the consequences which will result to those who are enabled, with God's help, to begin the earnest Christian life; and I will first mention, as one of the most blessed results, the present peace enjoyed. This will be a perfect peace, "not such as the world giveth:"—"Its legitimate elements," writes a pious author, "are delight in God's presence; dependance on his care; harmony with his will."

It has been well described in the following words, by the same writer:—"For, though the Gospel is primarily the grand tidings of everlasting life, its message relates not only to the future, it bestows blessings in hand; a foretaste and a pledge of those that are to come. It speaks of present pardon, peace, and favour; and, therefore, the spirit that it awakens is not a mere impatient expectation of a future inheritance, but is the quiet confidence of present right and title to that inheritance."

The promises which are given to God's believing people will be realized: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ." "He will speak peace unto his people and to his saints." "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have

peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The earnest Christian also enjoys communion with God :—in the busiest scenes of life, amidst the din of worldly business and distraction, he will often experience the fulfilment of the precious promise, "Lo, I am with you alway."

He can withdraw from the world's busy throng, and in the solitude of his soul hold communion with his God. We find this exemplified in the character of Wilberforce. "During a contested election, it was necessary," says Mr. Russel, one of his most active and friendly agents, "that I should have some private communication with him every day. I usually put myself in his way, therefore, when he came in from the hustings to dress for dinner. On each day as he entered, I perceived that he was repeating to himself what seemed the same words; at length I was able to catch them, and they proved to be the stanza of Cowper's :—

" 'The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And seem by Thy sweet bounty made
For those that follow Thee.' "

One who, during a life of active usefulness, was enabled to pursue the same path of earnest and

devoted piety, has been frequently heard to declare —“that in the most busy scenes of life he had been enabled, through the grace of God, to fix for a moment his thoughts on things above, and continually to realize the presence of that Being who had graciously led him into the way of righteousness.”

This is the spirit of the true servant of God; and thus it is he will pass through things temporal, so as not to lose sight of things which are eternal. Using temporal things, but desiring spiritual. “To seek God is to desire happiness; to find Him is that happiness,” is a saying left us by St. Augustine, and one that has been verified by all God’s people through all ages. And, oh! how soul-satisfying is the portion of the believer!—no longer has he an aching void, no longer does he pour on vain idols the best of his affections; but his soul is stayed upon his God: he can say with the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”

“The highest honours that the world can boast
Are subjects far too low for my desire;
The brightest beams of glory are at most
But dying sparkles of Thy living fire;
The proudest flames that earth can kindle, be
But mighty glow-worms, if compar’d to Thee:

Without Thy presence, wealth are bags of cares,
 Wisdom but folly ; joy, disquiet, sadness ;
 Friendship is treason, and delights are snares,
 Pleasures but pain, and mirth but pleasing madness.
 Without Thee, Lord, things be not what they be,
 Nor have they being, when compared to Thee.
 In having all things and not Thee, what have I ?
 Not having Thee, what have my labours got ?
 Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I ?
 And having Thee alone, what have I not ?
 I wish nor sea, nor land, nor could I be
 Possessed of heaven, heaven unpossessed of Thee.”*

Living in communion with God, and walking in his fear and love, the Christian delights, in the various scenes around him, to recognise the hand of his Heavenly Father, and still more in every personal gift does he rejoice,† for in the gift he enjoys the Giver also. Thus, when a minister remarked to a dying Christian on the loving-kindness of the Saviour, the answer was, “Yes, and the kindness of the creature flows to me *through his love and his kindness.*”

* Quarles.

† “And if in all things around him the Christian delights to recognise God, how much more in those which personally concern Him? God is not only with all things, but He blesses all things. He openeth his hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness. From Him cometh down every good and perfect gift. This, then, the Christian recollects, and delights in the recollection. All the comforts he enjoys come to him with a double blessing, and with an emphasis of bliss are his; for with the gift he enjoys the Giver also.

I would also bring before you the fact, that the earnest Christian life is essentially one of prayer.

Montgomery calls prayer, "Communion with heaven begun;" and you are most probably acquainted with his beautiful hymn, which so accurately expresses the end and purpose of prayer. One stanza—

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death—
He enters heaven with prayer;"—

will give a vivid conception of the characteristics of the life of the Christian.

This is also well depicted in the experience of Sir Fowell Buxton. "Prayer is the throwing up the heart to God continually," he said; "not always using words, but casting up the thoughts to Him. Everything leads me to prayer; and I always find it answered, both in little and great things."

When anticipating a material improvement would take place in his circumstances, his prayers were

Things which in themselves are good, become to him incomparably more so as representatives of the Good One, and as pledges of his love. And thus, to such a state of mind, the earthly becomes the memorial of the heavenly—the evanescent of the permanent—the incomplete of the perfect—the limited of the absolute—the manifold rills of the one unfailing fountain, the reflected rays of the originating Sun."—*Griffith's "Spiritual Life."*

constant and fervent that the proposed advantage should not be granted him, unless it would be good for him and his family. "If it be denied me," he observed, "I can only say and feel that I still thank God; and if it is appointed for me, I am sure it will be safe and good. I am as easy to leave it as if it concerned a five-pound note."

How accordant is this with the language of a Christian of an earlier period. "Prayer," says Jeremy Taylor, "is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our temper. Prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts; it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness."

It is by prayer that the Christian receives strength for his inward conflicts with his spiritual foes.

Thus it is related of the late Robert Hall, that on one occasion, when he had been somewhat excited in argument and had left the room, a friend going out unexpectedly, heard him repeating these words: "Lamb of God, calm my perturbed spirit!"

Such will ever be the breathings of God's children. They will habitually and constantly bring all their trials, their afflictions and temptations, to their Heavenly Father. In whatever they may engage, they will entreat his blessing.

We read of Mary Jane Graham, that "the spirit of prayer was the constant guard upon her intellectual studies."* Speaking of some perplexities relative to the pursuing of her studies, she adds, "I am now resolved, God helping me, to give this week to prayer; presenting each of my studies to Jesus, that He may prosper and sanctify it by his Spirit, take from it all self-love, and cause me, in all my employments, even in the least, to aim at his glory and to labour in his name. Join with me in this prayer."

To a correspondent who had inquired her sentiments relative to the cultivation of her mind, she writes:—"I think it may be done, *with a prayer*

* Legh Richmond's advice is here valuable:—"Begin and end the day with prayer; but content not yourself with an indolent or hurried exercise of devotion, without heart or meaning, and a cursory or irregular glancing at a passage of Scripture, under an idea of satisfying conscience, or doing your duty. Consider seriously the chief end of the appointment is the prescribed channel of intercourse with God: your strength, success, and preservation from evil, will depend on communion with Him. Everything will go on well or ill with you, in proportion as you are brought into contact with the Divine Spirit. In reading the Bible (I am now speaking of religion, and not of theology as a science and profession), take a few verses and meditate over them till you get the spirit and meaning of them wrought into your own soul. If you do not understand a passage, you may apply to a commentator for assistance."—*Domestic Portraiture.*

however, and a resolution that all that we do shall one day be employed in the service of Christ. I think the only thing is, never to lose sight of this great object. And to this end I know no other means than that of making it a subject of prayer. I have often been prevented from praying for success in study, because I thought it was better only to mention spiritual wants at the throne of grace. But I now think, that after having asked a blessing upon our common occupations, we are less likely to forget the end which alone can enable us to follow them without danger."

And not only will the Christian rejoice to pour out his soul in the privacy of his own closet, but family prayer will be his delight.

Robert Hall has well described the continued use of this means as "an edge or border to preserve the web of life from unravelling."

Surely no earnest Christian character will rest satisfied without asking God's blessing upon the daily duties of the household circle—without entreating that protection which is so needful. I would again here refer you to an example well worthy of being placed before you, that of Sir F. Buxton. "No one that ever attended his family prayers could avoid being struck with the intrinsic earnestness with which he poured out his feelings upon all his undertakings before God. He spread

the subject before Him, wrestling with *Him* in prayer for aid and guidance ; and though he spared no exertions of his own, he always felt that God alone could give the increase ; nor, when success had followed his efforts, did he forget Him from whom that success had been derived. Indeed, he habitually received the will of God, not only with submission, but thankfulness ; again and again, and again, does he trace, with grateful pleasure, the moulding hand of Providence."

The earnest Christian lives also a life of faith ; and this faith is not merely that of assent or persuasion—it is not a dead, inoperative faith ; it is not even the assent which is given to the truth of revealed religion, resulting from examination and conviction—it is a faith which "unites *assent* to the truth of God's revelations *with a noble confidence* in his promise. This faith combines assent with reliance, belief with trust. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name,' that is, in dependance upon my interest and merits, 'He shall give it you.' True and saving faith in Christ consists both of assent and trust ; Christ as the only atonement for sin, is exhibited as the object of this reliance." *

"Looking unto Jesus" was the passage of Scripture selected by Charlotte Elizabeth to be placed upon her tomb ; and, my beloved readers, as it is

* Watson.

accurately applied to her life and death, so must it form one of the distinguishing characteristic features of your Christian course. Christ is the object of the believer's hope and faith. "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "Nothing is required of us but this actual trust in, and personal apprehension, or taking hold of, the merits of Christ's death, as a sacrifice for sin ; and upon thus believing we are justified ; our faith is counted for righteousness, and sin is pardoned." From this will arise peace and joy in believing.

"I feel," writes one who had sought and found this happiness, "such an inward peace, such sweet communion with the Lord, such strong faith in Christ as my Saviour, as I never before experienced. I feel an inward witness that I have passed from death unto life, and that the Lord is my reconciled God and Saviour. O that I may never grieve the Spirit of my God ! O that I may follow on to know Him more perfectly !" *

Thus the whole dependance of the Christian will be on Jesus, as the way, the truth, and the life : "I live by the faith of the Son of God," will be the language of his heart ;—"By whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God ; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, sure

* Memorial of the late J—— F——.

and stedfast, and which entereth into that which is within the vail ;” here is the source of the Christian’s joy.

A friend once asked Mr. Franke, of Halle, how he maintained such constant peace ; his answer was, “By stirring up my mind a hundred times a-day. Wherever I am, whatever I do, I say, Blessed Jesus, have I truly a share in thy redemption ? Are my sins forgiven ? Am I guided by thy Spirit ? Thine I am ; wash me again and again ; strengthen me. By this constant converse with Jesus I have enjoyed serenity of mind, and a settled peace in my soul.”

The earnest Christian has also the testimony of a good conscience towards God. Conscience has been called by philosophers the moral sense. An excellent divine has defined it as that principle, power, or faculty within us which decides on the merit or demerit of our own actions, feelings, or affections, with reference to the rule of God’s law.

Good old Izaak Walton was wont to say, “He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping ;” and the value of an enlightened, firm, and sensitive conscience cannot be overrated. The light of nature, and the revealed will of God, both unite in making known to us the rule of conscience. How important, then, is it that we should carefully guard and cultivate this heaven-

born principle ! and how great is the blessing of being able to rejoice in the possession of a *good* conscience ! It has been well said, “A good conscience is more to be desired than all the riches of the East. How sweet are the slumbers of him who can lie down on his pillow, and review the transactions of every day, without condemning himself. A good conscience is the finest opiate.”

Let me now bring before you another important characteristic of the earnest Christian. I have spoken of the faith he will possess : one of its fruits will be a constant and habitual dependance upon Divine guidance and protection as he passes on through life.

Thus we read, “That which chiefly marked his (Sir F. Buxton’s) religious character was the absolute, child-like confidence with which he clung to the guiding hand of his Heavenly Father, wherever his path might lie. There was, in fact, no event in his life which he did not attribute to his immediate direction. ‘I do not want,’ said he, ‘to have religion proved to me: a superintending Providence is clear to demonstration.’” Not only will the Christian, in circumstances of prosperity, rejoice in the assurance that he is under Divine care, but in sorrow and sickness he will alike rely upon his never-failing Friend.

The believer knows that “all things shall work

together for good to them that love God." He rests upon the covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, which is the portion of the true child of God. He places the hand of faith upon the promise, " All other things shall be added unto you ;" and feeling the sweet assurance that the first object of his search, his one desire, has been to glorify his God, he experiences a blessed confidence of ultimate prosperity and blessedness.

I desire here to bring before you a most interesting example at once of strong faith and the realization of the truth of God's promises.

It is related of the Rev. Thomas Scott, the commentator, and shows the high esteem in which (far beyond his own estimation) he was held for his work's sake, and for the manner in which he had unreservedly given himself up to it. He found himself in difficulties, partly arising from having for years tried to sell the Family Bible cheaper than it could be afforded. He was in low spirits, and thus writes at the time :—" Except I can look to God, my prospect is dreary ; my infirm health also concurs in depressing my spirits ; but, though sometimes disheartened, I rise again above it." The only way in which he proposed to ask his friends to assist him was merely soliciting them to find him purchasers for his works, which he was ready to dispose of at a great reduction. Mr. Simeon was

one of the first to whom his difficulties and his proposed plan for extrication were made known.

The following is the letter he received from Mr. Simeon, in return:—

“ My dear Friend,—Never was a more delightful office committed to me, than that which I have to execute at this time. Your visit to Cambridge was a blessing to many, who are anxious to testify towards you their respect and love, and who earnestly request your acceptance of a few hundred pounds, which they have desired me to remit in their name, and in the name of others who have been benefited by your writings. The amount I have comprehended in a bill, &c. Greatly rejoicing in an event so expressive of their love to Christ, and the veneration they feel for your character, I am, most affectionately yours, C. SIMEON.”

The sum sent was 590*l.* as a present, and a large remittance for books.

Scott writes upon this subject to his son:—“ I was low last week, and when I received Mr. Simeon’s letter, and the bill for so large a sum, I was at first so overwhelmed with shame at my own unbelief and distrust, that I felt lower than ever. But I hope the Lord’s goodness will shame us both, and *all*, out of distrust and unbelief.” And again he wrote:—“ So you see that if I have too little regarded such matters while my need was not urgent,

when it is, how easily the Lord can do more for me than all my plans could have done in course of years, and in a manner which tends to make my publications more known and circulated, and, I verily believe, without in any degree deducting from my character ! Oh ! that this may make me ashamed of all my distrust and dejection, and that it may encourage you, and many others, to go on in the work of the Lord, without anxiety on this ground. Serve Him by *the day*, and trust Him by *the day*; never flinch at service because nothing is to be paid for it, and, when you want it in reality, you or yours will have it. David Brown did much, gratis, for India. The East India Company raised a monument for the old bachelor Swartz, but they made provision for Mr. Brown's large family."

" February 25th, 1814. I have received at least 2,000*l.* as presents in little more than two months, beside the sale of books ! You see how easily God can provide. '*Trust in the Lord, and do good: dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*' You cannot do a better service to the world than by bequeathing to it a well-educated family. Let this be *your* care, the rest will be the Lord's." *

* Wilberforce thus writes of this excellent minister :—" I am going on with Thomas Scott's Life in dressing. What a truly great man old Scott was, acting for so many years on the highest principles, not only above money, but above vain glory, or any other of the idols of men ! I always valued

Think not, my beloved readers, that this is a solitary instance of God's tender care for his faithful servants. It would be a delightful duty, did my space permit, for me to bring before you but a few of the wonderful proofs the children of God have in all ages received of his Providential goodness. The subject is one of the deepest interest to all who feel that they are partakers of God's pardoning love; for it is only those who are led by the Spirit of adoption who can so especially claim the guidance of Jehovah. It is true, that all God's creatures share the common bounties of his Providence. "He maketh his sun to shine upon the evil and the good," but the experience of his tender and unremitting care is more especially reserved for those who commit their way unto Him, who seek to be guided by his Holy Spirit, and who him, but now that his character is viewed more distinctly, he really appears to have been a Christian hero. I never saw a book which I should recommend so strongly to the constant study of a minister." "The grand point for imitation, and may we both attend to it," he writes to his eldest son, "is his integrity: he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. No consideration of interest, gratification, or credit, could make him swerve consciously a hair-breadth from the line of duty. This, depend on it, is the best of all signs. I have often remarked that it has always ended eminently well with those in whom it has been visible. Such an one was Lord Teignmouth! I know no quality which I always recognise with such heartfelt pleasure in any persons whom I love."

have made Him the object of their supreme love. Would that I could persuade you to make this love your choice!—to turn to God with full purpose of heart—to rest in nothing short of reconciliation through the blood of his dear Son—to take your Heavenly Father as your portion! By his Word, his ministering servants; by precepts, promises, and threatenings; by providential afflictions and dispensations, He urges you to come to Him, that you may enjoy the blessedness He has in store for his believing people.

If I speak only of the temporal good you will thus receive, think of what is included in the precious promises which are yours when you once become an earnest Christian character:—"All things shall work together for good." "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee." "He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." "Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, for your

heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

Such is but a small portion of the encouraging words with which, oh, amazing condescension! the creature is assured of the tender love and care of the great Creator. And will you not desire to be of those who are thus led by the Spirit of God, and are thus encouraged to cast their burden upon the Lord? There will be many occasions, in the most prosperous life, when clouds will lour, and tempests will arise; when earthly prospects will be overshadowed. Then is it that the true Christian reposes all his care upon his heavenly Father. He watches the leadings of Providence, and feels assured light will break out of the darkness:—

"When clouds of sorrow gather round,
His bosom owns no fear;
He knows, where'er his portion be,
His God will still be there."

Far otherwise must it be with those who live without God. In the hour of calamity they have no stay, no confidence, and are utterly powerless against the storm. Should their worldly schemes fail and their substance vanish, every source of comfort is dried up. To them may be aptly applied the words of Holy Writ: "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the

abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

And not only will the Christian exercise trust in God, but one feature in his character will be entire resignation to the Divine will. Whatever may be the afflictions appointed unto him, he knows that they come to him from love. "'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,' is the unvaried language of God in his providence. He will have credit every step. He will not assign reasons, because He will exercise faith."*

Thus, then, the believer will not seek to know the reason of an afflictive dispensation or bereavement, but will bow in humble submission.

Hannah More, on the death of a beloved sister, thus wrote to a friend: "He who gave her had a right to resume her, and I was enabled to say, as I received her last sigh, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord!'"

The loss of beloved friends, of sensible earthly comforts, will be felt by the servant of Christ; but, ah! how sweetened will the bitter cup of affliction be, by the recollection of the precious promise!— "All things shall work together for good to them

* Cecil.

that love God." Destitute of all worldly good, the Christian can still say—

" Give what Thou wilt, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away."

It is not, sometimes, until after a long training in the school of Christ, that this becomes the language of the earnest seeker; but when once the spirit is enabled to bow with perfect acquiescence to the will of God, when, perchance, all outward sources of comfort are removed, then is it that the Christian's joy begins.

During a long affliction, we find one who had been a most devoted character thus speaking to those around her: " My prayer must now be to submit to be useless. This is the very correction I stood in need of; to annihilate self is the greatest point, and to rejoice that the thing does as well, or better, though I am not permitted to be the doer of it.

' Those also serve who only stand and wait; '
but I find it less easy to *suffer* than to *do* for God's sake."

This eminent servant of God was spared for a long life of usefulness; and the heavenly fruits of the lessons learnt in the school of affliction, were afterwards recorded by her for the use and encouragement of her fellow-pilgrims.*

* Hannah More.

"Affliction," she writes, "is the school in which great virtues are acquired, in which great characters are formed. It is a kind of moral gymnasium, in which the disciples of Christ are trained to robust exercise, hardy exertion, and severe conflict. He, in whose hands we are, is too good and loves us too well to trust us with ourselves. He knows that we will not contradict our own inclinations, that we will not impose on ourselves anything unpleasant. God graciously does this himself, or He knows it would never be done. What was the condition of St. Paul's introduction to Christianity? It was not, I will crown him with honour and prosperity, with dignity and pleasure, but, 'I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake !'" *

* A striking passage, which is most interesting in relation to this subject, occurs in the writings of an author of the present day. "The compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius, for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life—terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth, which was waiting to be closed; breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones, more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains

The Christian pilgrim recognises the great design of his Master, the Captain of his salvation, in the training to which he is subjected ; and he exclaims, even when the heaviest waves of sorrow are rolling over him,

“I can do all things, or can bear
All suffering, if my Lord be near ;
Sweet pleasures mingle with my pains,
While His right hand my head sustains.”

Connected with this entire resignation to the will of God will be a spirit of self-denial. It was observed to me by one who, as a devoted missionary, had exemplified by practice that which he enforced by precept: “Mark ! that the Scriptures tell us to *take up* the cross. We are not to avoid it by going out of the way when it lies before us, but we are to *take it up and bear it.*” This, then, as opposed to the indulgence of ease and self, will be one prominent feature in the earnest Christian character. The grand lesson given to us by our great Master is, “I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me,” and this will be the desire of his followers.

the formation of new acquaintances, and the reception of new influences, that prove of the first importance to the next years ; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots, and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener, is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighbourhoods of men.”

I ought, my dear readers, in an earlier page of this little work, to have brought this part of my subject more prominently before you. It would have taken its right position had I numbered it with the requisites to an earnest character; I cannot, therefore, dismiss it here, without seeking to impress upon your minds the deep importance of your being prepared, in entering upon a decided Christian course, to exercise self-denial on many occasions. You are not only called to believe in the Saviour, but you are also to suffer for Him. "The character of Christianity may be seen by the very images of military conflict, under which the Scriptures so frequently exhibit it. Suffering is the initiation into a Christian's calling; it is his education for heaven. Shall the scholar rebel at the discipline which is to fit him for his profession? or the soldier at the exercise which is to qualify him for victory? But even under this painful exercise will the Christian rejoice, in the thought that he is permitted to be a partaker of Christ's sufferings."

"How many times," writes Henry Martyn, when labouring as a missionary, "in the day have I occasion to repeat the words—

"' If on my face, for thy dear name,
Shame and reproaches be,
All hail, reproach! and welcome, shame!
If Thou remember me.' "

Do not, my beloved young friends, shrink from any command because of the cross connected with it. Be assured that if you press onwards, depending on Divine help, you will be enabled to deny yourselves, and to fulfil all the requirements of the Gospel. The love of Christ will be motive sufficient to enable you to conquer even the sin which doth most easily beset you. Let me seek to direct you to some especial precepts in connexion with this subject.

“ Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” “ Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” “ Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called.” “ Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, “ If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” “ And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

I am anxious also particularly to impress this important fact upon your mind, that the earnest Christian is Catholic in his spirit; he extends the hand of Christian fellowship to all who love the Lord Jesus; and he looks forward with joyful

anticipation to the time when he will meet all the now separated members of the mystical body of Christ.

“ There may be unity, though not uniformity, in the Church of Christ,” is the remark of an eloquent writer of the present day; and it is this unity that is experienced by the true disciple of the Saviour. The world can know nought of this happiness; it is reserved but for those who are united to Christ as their Head. He is the vine, they are the branches.

I love to recal, in connexion with this delightful subject, some lines which were frequently repeated by the beloved parent to whose revered memory I referred in a former chapter. Often, as he contemplated the assumptions of proud intolerance or sectarian bigotry, would he exclaim—

“ What is a Church? let truth and reason speak,
They would reply, the faithful, pure, and meek,
From every fold, the one selected race,
Of all communions, and in every place.”

I must not pass on without saying one word, my dear readers, on the happiness those lose who are strangers to that which has been fitly denominated the communion of saints. Enjoying fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, however humble may be the outward position of the Christian, he is a member of the universal Catholic Church. To him will belong the blessedness of forming one

of the glorious company before the throne; and even on earth he experiences a foretaste of that supreme happiness.

Far removed from the uncertain friendship of the world is the communion enjoyed by God's people. The one is often based on false profession, which will, perchance, be unmasked should rival passions clash. The other, on the truth and love inculcated by the Gospel. The tie in the one case is, too frequently, worldly interest or policy; in the other, the uniting love of the Saviour.

As an electric chain is the sacred bond of brotherhood which unites the family of God on earth. By young and inexperienced Christians this subject may be little understood, but as they advance in the Divine life, they soon experience the comfort and support of this Christian fellowship. The word of affectionate counsel, spoken in season, to encourage and cheer the drooping spirit; Christian sympathy, expressed with sincere accents of affection —these are some of its fair and precious fruit.

Let me but bring before you one instance of this, as related by Sir F. Buxton:—"I visited E. Fry this evening," he writes, "and found her in tears and in a very low state. I reminded her of the promises of God, and of the merits of Christ, whereby she and such as she are assured of the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth

not away. Soon she was cheerful and full of smiles; and when I went away, and had left the room for that purpose, she sent for me back, and whispered in my ear, ‘How precious is the love and sweet harmony which has always prevailed between us and amongst us! I trust as we have loved one another in time, so we may abound in love towards each other for all eternity. How delightful is the thought of eternal love binding us together!’” *

I may also mention, that cheerfulness will be an eminent characteristic of the earnest Christian. Feeling assured that he is fulfilling the great end

* We will turn, for one moment, to the picture presented by the social circle of the beloved and lamented Joseph John Gurney, another member of this highly-favoured group.

The author of a sketch of his life, speaking of the Annual Meetings of the British and Foreign Bible Society, says, “The day of its anniversary at Norwich was with him always a ‘high day.’ Formerly, its evening, and for some years past its morning, was spent at Earlham (his residence) by the Committee in social and religious intercourse with the Deputation and other friends. How delightful it was on such occasions to form one in the varied circle, of which he was the ever bright and hallowed centre! How delightful to meet there eminent and honoured Christians, of all ranks and denominations, uniting with his own lovely family, in friendly fellowship and in domestic worship! How delightful to hear his Scripture readings and expositions, recommending to us that truth and charity which he so fully and closely combined, and to sympathize with him in those supplications for the

of existence, though, perhaps, in the midst of imperfection, he rejoices in the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

“A wise traveller goeth on cheerily,
Through fair weather and foul :
He knoweth that his journey must be sped,
So he carrieth his sunshine with him.”

Izaak Walton delighted to dwell upon the reverend gaiety of Archbishop Hooker ; and this is the true cheerfulness with which the believer will review the past and look forward to the future.

I have spoken before of the important fact, that all the powers of the earnest Christian will be consecrated to the service of his God ; and as he will seek in health to devote to this grand object all his strength and vigour, so when old age comes over him, even then his feeble powers will be given to his Master’s cause.

The aged Newton wrote thus, when far advanced in his pilgrimage :—“I may say as the late Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, said to me, ‘I cannot do as I wish, nor as I have done. The shadows of the

Church and the world which he so fervently offered up ! ‘Surely it was none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven !’ Wilberforce, Buxton, Kinghorne, Simeon, and Innes, and several others, who once met in fellowship there, are now gone to that world where he is gone, to unite with him in the song of Moses and the Lamb.”—*From Brief Memoir of J. J. Gurney, published by J. Fletcher, Norwich.*

evening are advancing upon me. But while I can use my pen, or my tongue, I know who has a right to their service.””

And this will be one source of his peace of mind. It has been well said, “Industry is but another name for happiness.” This is constantly exemplified in the experience of the active disciple. To be honoured to bear the humblest part in some great work is a cause for thankfulness and praise, and even should nature sink, there will be joy in the thought, that the last remnant of strength has been spent to the glory of God.

Bishop Cumberland being told by some of his friends that he would wear himself out by intense application, replied, in the words of Bacon, “It is better to wear out than rust out.”

This may surely be applied with double force to the efforts of the true follower of Christ, for the spiritual or temporal good of his fellow-creatures.

This principle of glorifying God in all things will be carried out into every part of his character. He will allow no opportunity of doing good to pass unimproved. Even his intercourse and correspondence with others will partake of the same spirit.*

* The following extract from a letter of Wilberforce to Lord Muncaster is a delightful instance in point:—“My dear Muncaster, how can we go on, as if present things were to last for ever, when so often reminded by accidents like these,

An excellent author has said, "There are few occasions in life in which we are more called upon to watch ourselves narrowly, and to resist the assaults of serious temptations, than in conversation."

In the lives of good men, we find this one of the subjects to which they particularly directed their attention. We see Wilberforce noting it in his diary as an important object of study and attention.

Of Hannah More a Christian minister writes :—
"Great as her fame has been, I never considered it

that the fashion of this world passeth away? Every day I live I see greater reason in considering this life but as a passage to another. And when summoned to the tribunal of God, to give an account of all things we have done in the body, how shall we be confounded by the recollection of those many instances in which we have relinquished a certain eternal for an uncertain transitory good! You are not insensible to these things, but you think of them rather like a follower of Socrates than a disciple of Jesus. You see how frankly I deal with you; in truth, I can no otherwise so well show the interest I take in your happiness. These thoughts are uppermost in my heart, and they will come forth when I do not repress my natural emotions. Oh, that they had a more prevailing influence over my disposition and conduct! then might I hope to afford men occasion to glorify our Father, which is in heaven, and I should manifest the superiority of the principle which actuated me, by the more than ordinary spirit and activity by which my Parliamentary, my domestic, and all my other duties were marked and characterized."

equal to her merit. Such a fine and complete combination of talent and goodness, and of zeal and discretion, I never witnessed. All her resources, influences, and opportunities were simply and invariably made to subserve one purpose, in which she lived not to herself, but to Him who died for us and rose again! There was nothing I admired more than her *conversation*, and not only its eloquence, but its judiciousness, its selectness, its appropriateness. Whatever was the party or the topic, ‘upon her tongue was the law of kindness.’ There was never a word to offend, or wound, or grieve, but always something to instruct and improve; her speech was always with grace, seasoned with salt, and ministered to the edifying of the hearers. You could not touch her without finding her electrical wit, genius, and godliness. Her very praise was moral. If she praised a sermon, it was not a sermon that might have a little air of originality, but one that commended itself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. She often remarked, that preaching was an instrument, and the best instrument was that which did its work best.”*

It was in relation to this excellent person’s extended sphere of usefulness in the upper classes, that the Rev. John Wesley said, “Tell her to live

* Life.

in the world; *there* is the sphere of her usefulness; they will not let *us* come near them."

This principle of doing all for the glory of God will be ever predominant in the Christian mind, and his thoughts will continually be reverting to it.

Let us mark the spiritual state of Wilberforce after a week of continued and most active employment. His Sunday entry in his diary is as follows:—"I have this day been commemorating the redeeming love of Christ. May this be to me the commencement of a new era! How hard do I find it to trust Christ for all! Yet this is that simple faith, that humble, child-like principle, which produces love, and peace, and joy. Oh, let me seek it diligently, whilst it is called to-day! I have been mixing a little with worldly people, and their pursuits and cares and joys do indeed seem most contemptible: but it is not enough to see this, I should be filled also with the love of God and Christ, and of all mankind for his sake, with a fixed desire to please Him and do all for his glory."*

Observe, further, my beloved young friends, the humility of the earnest Christian.

When Wilberforce published his "Practical Christianity," which had a most important influence and bearing upon the religious interests of

* Life.

the whole community; when the success of his book was so great that within half-a-year five editions, 7,500 copies, had been called for, and his friends were writing to him from all quarters, when the attention of the great and the noble was alike attracted by the singular spectacle of such a work proceeding from the pen of a layman, what was the spirit with which this devoted servant of God viewed his own condition? *

A friend who was with him in Bath, at the time

* "I heartily thank you for your book," wrote Lord Muncaster; "as a friend, I thank you for it, as a man, I doubly thank you; but as a member of the Christian world, I render you all gratitude and acknowledgment. I thought I knew you well, but I know you better now, my dearest, excellent Wilberforce."

"I am truly thankful to Providence," wrote Bishop Porteus, "that a work of this nature has made its appearance at this tremendous moment. I shall offer up my fervent prayers to God, that it may have a powerful and extensive influence on the hearts of men, and in the first place on my own, which is already humbled, and will, I trust, in time be sufficiently awakened by it."

"I deem it," Mr. Newton told him, "the most valuable and important publication of the present age, especially as it is yours."

"I sincerely hope," wrote the Lord Chancellor (Loughborough), "that your book will be read by many with that just and proper feeling which the awful circumstances in which we stand ought to produce."

The effect of this work can scarcely be overrated. In

when it had just appeared, observes, "I was much struck with his entire simplicity of manners. The place was very full; the sensation which his work produced drew upon him much observation; but he seemed neither flattered nor embarrassed by the interest he excited."

The entries of his private journal will enable us to see how far the popularity of the book extended. In 1826, fifteen editions had issued from the press, in England. "In India," says Henry Martyn, "Wilberforce is eagerly read." In America, the work was immediately reprinted, and twenty-five editions had been sold in the same period. It has been translated into the French, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, and German languages. Not a year passed throughout his (Wilberforce's) after-life in which he did not receive fresh testimonies to the blessed effects which it pleased God to produce through this publication. In acknowledging the goodness of his God, the outpourings of his heart are warm and frequent. Men of the first rank and highest intellect, clergy and laity, traced to it their serious impression of religion, and tendered their warmest acknowledgments in various ways; from the anonymous correspondent, "who had purchased a small freehold in Yorkshire, that by his vote he might offer him a slight tribute of respect," down to the grateful message of the expiring Burke. "Have you been told," Mr. Henry Thornton asks Mrs. Hannah More, "that Burke spent much of the two last days of his life in reading Wilberforce's book, and said that he derived much comfort from it; and that if he lived he should thank Wilberforce for having sent such a book into the world? So says Mrs. Crewe, who was with Burke at the time?" Before his death, Mr. Burke summoned Dr. Laurence to his side, and committed specially to him the expression of these thanks.

us to understand the secret of this calm self-possession.

“ Bath, April 14th, three o’clock, Good Friday.—I thank God that I *now* do feel in some degree as I ought this day. I trust that I feel true humiliation of soul from a sense of my own extreme unworthiness; a humble hope in the favour of God in Christ; some emotion from the contemplation of Him who at this very moment was hanging on the cross; some shame at the multiplied mercies I enjoy; some desire to devote myself to Him who has so dearly bought me; some degree of that universal love and good-will, which the sight of Christ crucified is calculated to inspire. Oh! if the contemplation *here* can produce these effects on my hard heart, what will the vision of Christ in glory produce hereafter! I feel somewhat of pity, too, for a thoughtless world; and, oh! what gratitude is justly due from me, (the vilest of sinners, when compared with the mercies I have received,) who have been brought from darkness into light, and I trust from the pursuit of earthly things to the prime love of things above! Oh, purify my heart still more by Thy grace; quicken my dead soul, and purify me by Thy Spirit, that I may be changed from glory to glory, and be made even here in some degree to resemble my heavenly Father.”

Truly has it been said, “Honour is like the shadow, which, as it flies from those who follow it, so it follows those who flee from it.”

I would further remark to you, that with regard to the true Christian, the Sabbath is his joy and delight. It has been well observed that, “we may judge by our regard for the Sabbath, whether eternity will be forced upon us. The application of this rule, as it respected Henry Martyn, will discover a singular meetness in him for the inheritance of the saints in light. His Sabbaths were Sabbaths indeed; the antepast often of that rest which is everlasting.”

In the midst of political business and excitement, we find the pious Wilberforce recording his delight in this day. “Oh, what a blessing Sunday is! interposed between the waves of worldly business, like the Divine path of the Israelites through Jordan.”

Thus do God’s servants delight in the holy rest which He has ordained. They take to themselves the precepts of old Herbert:—

“Sundays observe, think when the bells do chime
 ‘Tis angels’ music, therefore come not late:—
 God then deals blessings.
 Let vain or busy thoughts have then no part;
 Bring not thy plough, thy plots or pleasure:
 Christ purged his temple, so must thou thy heart.”

The Christian rejoices in the sacred day. He

views it as a foretaste of the future rest that remaineth for the people of God.

“I feel as if God had given man fifty-two springs in the year !” was the exclamation of a Christian poet, as he hailed the advent of another Sabbath.

The sacred oracles of God will be the believer’s constant delight. He will go in all his perplexities to this beloved guide, and thence draw the supplies he needs of wisdom and strength. An interesting example of this is seen in the life of one of our most eminent philanthropists.

We are told, that “On a most memorable evening in the annals of the anti-slavery cause, he had reached his study door to proceed to the House of Commons, when he went back to have one look at his Bible. He opened on the 58th chapter of Isaiah, and he read these two verses:—‘If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, &c.’ ‘The remembrance of them preserved me,’ he said to his daughter, ‘from being in the least anxious the whole evening. I felt so sure the promise would be fulfilled to me—“the Lord shall guide thee continually.”’”*

* Sir F. Buxton.

The earnest Christian will not be satisfied with a mere perusal of the Word of God, but he will strive to hide its precepts and promises in his heart. An affecting instance of this is seen in the farewell letter of the martyr Ridley, to a friend. He adverts to the happy hours he had passed in Pembroke Hall. "In thy orchard —, the walls and trees (if they could speak) would bear me witness I learned without book almost all Paul's Epistles, yea, and I ween, all the canonical epistles, of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweet smell thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me into heaven, for the profit thereof I have felt in all my lifetime ever after."

Not only will the Christian seek his own spiritual edification, but he will desire that others should partake of the same profit. He will not shrink to make the sacred precepts known as his guide. Before all those over whom his influence in any degree extends, will he seek to bring the words of Holy Writ, fulfilling the precept, "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

It is the judicious observation of one of our bishops, that "it is indeed remarkable how much the language of the Israelitish law is at variance with the opinion of those who connect the ideas of hypocrisy or affectation with every introduction of subjects relating to God." We might, indeed, take an important lesson from the conduct of the Jews, in their high esteem for the Word of God. "I would not have heard you," wrote Trypho, the Jew, to Justin Martyr, "had you not referred everything to Scripture."

Let me now speak of the happiness of the true disciple of Jesus in the prospect of death. He anticipates the joys of heaven; soon to him the conflict will be past, and he will enter into the joy of his Lord. Hear, my beloved young friends, the language of one lying at the borders of the grave. "This is heaven begun! I have done with darkness for ever; for ever Satan is vanquished. Nothing now remains but salvation with eternal glory."

I shall endeavour now to bring before you some faint idea of the feelings with which the earnest Christian will meet the last enemy. Example will be here invaluable. Remember, my dear young friends, that like faith will be given to you, if you are enabled to "follow those who through faith and

patience now inherit the promises." I shall take you to the last scene of the devoted missionary, the minister, the nobleman, the private individual, and the lowly Christian; and then you will be able to form some judgment of that mighty principle which can overcome the sting of death.

And, oh! who can describe the blessedness of the devoted servant of Christ, when, freed from the burden of the flesh, he enters into the joy of his Lord! We are told in Holy Scripture that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

In the awful solemnity of the dying hour, when the powers of nature are fast declining, think, my beloved readers, of the holy confidence with which the true believer may prepare to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death. He enters it not alone, for his Saviour is near; and even as his feet approach the margin of death's cold flood, he hears a voice, saying, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." "Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord." He looks beyond the grave, and exclaims, in the confidence of hope and the full assurance of faith,—

" My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound ;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

We will first contemplate the closing scene of the devoted missionary, Schwartz. We are told that he frequently spoke of his death, and delighted to dwell upon any providential circumstances which had attended him in life ; he would generally add, " and so will God show me mercy unto the end." During his last illness, he would often desire his school children to sing the beautiful hymn, beginning—

" Far from my thoughts, vain world, begone,
Let my religious hours alone.
Fain would mine eyes my Saviour see ;
I wait a visit, Lord, from Thee."

This he called his beloved song. When his last moments drew near, several of his brethren sung and prayed beside him ; he joined them with his dying lips, with great delight. When most of the ministers had retired, he continued in silent prayer, except that once he was heard thus to commit his soul into the hands of his God and Saviour, " Lord, hitherto Thou hast preserved me, hitherto Thou hast brought me, and hast bestowed innumerable benefits upon me ; do what is pleasing in Thy sight. I commend my spirit into Thy hands ; cleanse and adorn it

with the righteousness of my Redeemer, and receive me into the arms of Thy love and mercy." Soon after this, Mr. Gerickè, thinking from his appearance that his spirit had fled, commenced a favourite hymn, "Only to thee, Lord Jesus Christ," when, as he began the second verse, the dying missionary raised his voice, and joined in the song of praise to his Saviour. Soon afterwards, without a groan, he closed his eyes on all worldly objects, and entered into his eternal rest.

A Christian poet has justly said—

"Is that his death-bed, where the Christian lies?
No! 'tis not his, 'tis death itself that dies."

We will further mark the triumph of this overcoming faith, and the source of its efficacy. A Christian on his death-bed was asked whether he thought he should die. "Yes," replied he, "but that gives me no uneasiness; if I die I shall be with God, and if I live God will be with me." "When Simeon was drawing to the close of his valuable life, he said to a friend, 'I never felt so ill before: I conceive my present state cannot last long; this exhaustion must be a precursor of death; but I lie here waiting for the issue without a fear, without a doubt, and without a wish.' When Mr. Carus asked him, what might be the subject of his meditations or thoughts, he immediately answered,

with characteristic animation, ‘I don’t think now, I am enjoying.’ Afterwards, when he had revived a little, he remarked, ‘It is said, O death ! where is thy sting ?’ then looking at us, as we stood around his bed, he asked, in his own peculiarly expressive manner, ‘Do you see any sting here?’ We answered, ‘No, indeed, it is all taken away.’ He then said, ‘Does not this prove that my principles were not founded on fancies or enthusiasm? but that there is a reality in them: I find them sufficient to support me in death.’”

We are told of Mrs. Martha More, that when a friend, seeing her in extreme agony, pitied her, she answered, “I love whatever comes from God, and therefore I love my sufferings.”

When the Rev. Thomas Scott was in a low and weak state of health, his servant inquired of him how he felt; he replied, “Very poorly. I shall soon be at home;” and then added, “Oh ! how my heart leaps and exults within me, at the thought of so very soon joining the glorious company before the throne !”

We read of the Rev. Mr. Roquet, that just before he expired, he exclaimed thrice, “I want to go home !” when his spirit winged its way to the mansions prepared for it, in the unseen world of glory.

Let me, also, bring to your recollection the last words of Felix Neff, which he traced with his dying hand: "I ascend to our Father in perfect peace. Victory! victory! victory! through Jesus Christ!"

Observe, my beloved readers, the holy confidence of these servants of God. A striking instance is also seen in the experience of a poor and humble person. We are told, that just before she expired she said, "Put aside the curtain," which was accordingly done, and the beams of the sun coming full into the room and on her bed, she remarked, "Thirty-and-four years have I known the Lord, and can no more doubt of his eternal love to me, an unworthy creature, than I can doubt of the shining of the sun, which I now see and feel." She uttered only a few more words, full of faith, and then departed to those realms of joy, of which God and the Lamb are the sun, the temple, and the glory.

"It matters little at what hour of day
The righteous falls asleep. Death cannot come
To him untimely, who is fit to die.
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven;
The briefer life, the earlier immortality."

Thus is it that the follower of Christ will be always prepared for the coming of his Lord. Whether he is allowed to lie long, waiting for his change, or called suddenly to enter the presence of his

Master, he will be equally ready. We shall behold the same bright and lively hope in the aged Christian as in the youthful disciple.

"The last time I saw Lord Teignmouth," writes the Rev. C. Blunt, "as soon as I sat down, he said, 'Mr. Blunt, I will tell you what I was just thinking of. It describes my state at present, for I do not think I have much longer to remain here. But this is what I am doing. I am looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. He gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' He then added words to this effect: 'I have no hope, but in Christ Jesus, in his sacrifice, in his blood, in his righteousness. What could all the world do for me now? So great a sinner as I am, so helpless, what could save me but my glorious Redeemer ?'"

One who had been a most energetic and devoted minister of the Gospel, thus expressed himself shortly before he was taken to his eternal rest. "I shall creep into heaven through some crevice in the door."

"Gently, my Saviour, let me down,
To slumber in the arms of death;
I rest my soul on Thee alone,
E'en till my last expiring breath."

He was soon after overheard saying to himself, “Eye hath not seen, or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.”

The dying scene of Dr. Hope, a pious physician, was brightened by a delightful exhibition of Christian faith. “I reminded him,” writes his affectionate wife, “that he had something more to say, and begged him to take the earliest opportunity of doing so. He then added, ‘The second is soon said, Christ is all in all to me, and I have no hope but in Him; He is indeed all in all !’”

We are told of Jane Taylor, that the fear of death was taken away, and an unhesitating trust in a Redeemer abundantly given. Her prayers were heard and answered. As the night of the grave drew on, her restless and too sensitive imagination was calmed and quieted; she experienced the blessedness of those whose minds are stayed upon God, and the fulfilment of the promise: “When thou walkest through the valley of death, I will be with thee.”

I would that my space would permit me to bring more of these delightful evidences of faith in lively exercise before you. I must but mention the dying words of the Rev. Richard Watson, a bright luminary in the Church of Christ, and one of whom the poet Montgomery beautifully said, “In the

midst of life he consumed away, like incense upon the altar, burning bright and diffusing fragrance till not a residue can be seen."

When speaking of the atonement, Mr. Watson would say: "On this rock I rest, and feel it firm beneath me.

"How firm He proves!
The Rock of Ages never moves!
Yet the sweet streams that from Him flow,
Attend us all the desert through."

Yes, I feel I am on the rock: in the Lord I have righteousness and strength!"

You, perhaps, are inclined to ask, what will be the employments and the pleasures of the future state? We read, that the spirits of the just made perfect are "before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in his temple. And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is on the throne shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"Thus much—and this is all we know—
They with their Saviour rest,
Have done with pain, and grief, and woe,
And in his love are blest."

A Christian writer has thus spoken of one of

the probable employments of that state of blessedness :—

“ In the world, it is only the effects of wisdom, power, and greatness which you discern. It is not impossible that, hereafter, the qualities themselves in the Supreme Being may be the immediate objects of contemplation. What an object is the universe to a creature, if there be a creature who can comprehend its system ! but it must be an infinitely higher exercise of understanding to view the scheme of it, in that Mind which projected it, before its foundations were laid ; and surely we have meaning to the words when we speak of going further, and viewing, not only the system in His mind, but the wisdom and intelligence itself, from whence it proceeded.”

I must not close this little volume without addressing one word of affectionate counsel and encouragement to my dear readers. Do you feel an ardent desire to realize the blessedness of the righteous ?—to know what is meant by a life of faith and communion with God ? Oh, delay not, my beloved young friends, this great work of preparation for an eternal state ! The tender invitations of your Saviour are now sounding in your ears :—“ O taste and see that the Lord is good.” “ And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” “ I have

loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." "If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee." "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me."

I cannot say farewell without one word more in reference to your present position with regard to time.

"Life," remarks Abbott, "if you understand by it the season of preparation for eternity, is more than half gone to those who are between fifteen and twenty. In a vast number of cases it is more than half gone, even in duration; and if we consider the thousand influences which crowd around the years of childhood and youth, winning us to religion, and making a surrender of ourselves to Jehovah easy and pleasant; and on the other hand, look forward beyond the years of maturity, and see these influences losing all their power, and the heart becoming harder and harder under the deadening effects of continuance in sin, we shall not doubt a moment that the years of immaturity make a far more important part of our time of probation than all those that follow." It is a saying of Dr. Southey's that, "live as long as you may, the first twenty years are the longest half of your life; they appear so while they are passing; they seem to have been so when we look back to them; and they

take up more room in our memory than all the years that succeed them."

These solemn thoughts must surely have some weight with you. Would that I could induce you to hearken to the promise, "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Your present state, if one of indecision, has been realized by *each* of the eminent Christians whose example I have brought before you.* They rested not

* I am anxious particularly to recommend to my dear readers the lives of good men, as a most profitable and important branch of study.

Addison remarks, "That there is nothing in history which is so improving to the reader, as those accounts which we meet with of the deaths of eminent persons, and of their behaviour in that dreadful season. I may also add, that there are no parts in history which affect and please the reader in so sensible a manner. The reason I take to be this, because there is no other single circumstance in the story of any person, which can possibly be the case of every one who reads it. A battle or a triumph, is a position in which not one man in a million is likely to be placed; but when we see a person at the point of death, we cannot forbear being attentive to everything he says or does, because we are sure that, some time or other, we shall ourselves be in the same melancholy circumstance. The general, the statesman, or the philosopher, are, perhaps, characters which we may never act in; but the dying man is one whom, sooner or later, we shall certainly resemble."

Howe has the following excellent observations on the value of Christian biography:—"The Christian community at large owes a great debt of gratitude to the recorded example of its purest and holiest members. Individually

there, but by the help of God's Holy Spirit pressed onwards till they attained to eternal blessedness.

Oh ! let it be thus with you also, my dear young friends. It will be so if you seek aright. Only come to the footstool of Divine mercy ; ask for the pardon, the cleansing, the strength and wisdom that you need, and pleading ever in the name of your great High Priest, your once crucified but now exalted Saviour, your prayers will be heard and abundantly answered. You may feel you know not even how to pray ; here then is a subject for your petitions.—“Lord, teach us to pray !” was the prayer of the disciples when the Redeemer was with them on earth, and I would beseech you to adopt the same language.

Bishop Horne observes, “Youth is no obstacle in the way of obtaining the favour of Christ. The disciple whom Jesus loved was the youngest of all the apostles ; and certain it is, that religion never appears to greater advantage, than in the persons of those who ‘remember their Creator in the days

exhibiting the beauty and excellence of the Gospel principles by which they are governed, and collectively embodying a living and substantial representation of that fulness of stature to which a disciple of Christ may attain, they grow into an exhaustless treasury of motives and inducements to holy living, and of models of Christian deportment, which diffuses its richness over the Church and counteracts the persevering endeavours of the world to debase the standard of Christian faith and holiness.”

of their youth,' and are admitted early into the number of the disciples of the holy Jesus; it is then like a diamond set in gold. There is something more noble in renouncing the world for the love of Christ, when the relish for sensible enjoyments is at the highest, than there can be in doing it when the evil days come, in which there is no further satisfaction or pleasure to be had in earthly things. He surely is not so likely to accomplish his journey who begins it when the sun is going down, as he who sets out at the hour of its rising. Youth, like the morning, is the proper season for every task that requires time and pains. Then all the powers of body and soul are fresh and vigorous, as those of one awakened from a sound and kindly sleep. Then is the golden opportunity, the sweet hour of prime, when the day is before us. The night cometh when no man can work. 'I have written unto you, young men,' saith John himself, 'because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' Rejoice then, O young man, in thy youth! not because thou art not able to riot in excess and wantonness, as the heathen, who know not God, but because thou hast it in thy power to become like the youthful John, the beloved of thy Master, who seeketh such to worship Him."

Neither say, these were rare instances, but few can be found like them—so earnest, so devoted, so

zealons, in the work to which they were called. Limited time and space have obliged me to relinquish mentioning many whose names stand forward as bright examples of Christian earnestness. Even while I write, the hallowed memories of the holy dead crowd around me.

The lion-hearted Luther, as he stood before the proud and mighty Emperor Charles and his brilliant court, uttering those memorable words: "Hier stehe ich: Ich kann nicht anders: Gott helf mir! Amen." "Here I stand: I can do no other: may God help me! Amen!" The band of Christian ministers who arose in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and went through the length and breadth of our land, to arouse the dying embers of vital Christianity, devoting all their energies and talents to the preaching of Christ crucified; the Moravian missionaries, with their heroic devotion; the devout and honourable women not a few, who were associated with the name of the Countess of Huntingdon; these, and the recollection of kindred spirits, should be to us as a delightful incentive in the Christian course, for they are now the witnesses of our own spiritual conflicts, and we shall one day, through grace, join their blessed company.

Beloved readers, once more I would ask you to mark the spirit in which this great work should be carried on.

Let us for one moment turn again to the example of those who were once, like ourselves, pilgrims and sojourners below, but have now joined the glorious assembly of the Church triumphant above.

Would that my feeble efforts might be the means, under God, of leading you to make the same resolution as that with which Hannah More began the new year :—“ O Lord ! I resolve to begin this year with a solemn dedication of myself to Thee ! Thine I am ; I am not my own, I am bought with a price. Let the time suffice for me to have lived to the world ; let me henceforward live to Him who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Here you may trace the source of the wisdom and strength so richly bestowed upon this distinguished Christian.

With one more example I must content myself, drawn from the practice of Wilberforce, the earnest-minded and devoted Christian. “ Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day. Lord, I am spared while others are cut off. Let me now dedicate myself to Thee with a more entire surrender than I have ever yet made. I resolve, by the grace of God, to be more watchful over my temper. Secondly—Not to speak rashly or harshly. Thirdly—To watch over my thoughts—not to indulge in vain, idle, resentful, impatient, worldly

imaginings. Fourthly—To strive after closer communion with God. Fifthly—To let no hour pass without some thought of death. Sixthly—To ask myself every night when I lie down, Am I fit to die? Seventhly—To labour, to do, and to suffer the whole will of God. Eighthly—To cure my over-anxiety, by casting myself on God in Christ. I will confess my sins, repent of them—plead the atonement—resolve to love God and Christ—implore the aid of the Spirit for light, strength, and direction—be humbled for my past failures—watch and pray.”

Let me also show you the objects, by the contemplation of which this excellent Christian character was accustomed to revive his faith and stimulate his labours:—“Through death the Christian’s soul goes to—first, perfect purity!—secondly, fulness of joy!—thirdly, everlasting freedom!—fourthly, perfect rest!—fifthly, health and fruition!—sixthly, complete security!—seventhly, substantial and eternal good!”

I bid my dear readers farewell! My aim and end in compiling this little volume will have been answered, if to some earnest seeker it brings one germ of thought, one glimpse of an inner life, of the possible attainment of that “rest which remaineth for the people of God.”

“ Pensioner of life, be wise, and heed my friendly counsel,
I also am a pilgrim, with scrip and staff as thou :
Wouldest thou be bold against the past, and all its evil
memories,
Wouldest thou be safe, amid the present, its dangers and
temptations,
Wouldest thou be hopeful of the future, vague though it
be, and endless ?
Haste thee ! Repent, believe, obey ! thou standest in the
courage of a legion :
Commend the past to God, with all its irrevocable harm,
Humbly, but in checrful trust, and banish vain regrets ;
Come to Him, continually come, casting all the Present at
his feet,
Boldly, but in prayerful love, and fling off selfish cares ;
Commit the Future to his will, the viewless fated Future ;
Zealously go forward with integrity, and God will bless thy
faith.
For that, feeble as thou art, there is with thee a mighty
Conqueror,
Thy Friend, the same for ever, yesterday, to-day, and to-
morrow.”—*Proverbial Philosophy*.

APPENDIX.

LETTERS

FROM

CHRISTIAN PARENTS TO THEIR CHILDREN;

PRAYERS, ETC.

LETTERS.

*Blessedness of Christ's Service, of entire Devotedness
to the Saviour.*

FROM THE REV. H. VENN TO HIS DAUGHTER.

February 5th, 1780.

THIS comes to your hands, my dear Eling, on your birthday; now of age sufficient to understand, and, through the teaching of God's Spirit, both firmly to believe and be suitably affected with your condition. You know you are born in a state of exile, at a distance from your God, of whose wondrous name you hear from his own oracles; but are not yet permitted to see Him as He is. Your life is continued that you may become attached to Him—be of one judgment with Him—find your felicity in his love, and the lively hope of eternal life in his presence.

I wish you a happy year, in considering yourself as none of your own, but the Lord's—His, not merely as a creature, made and supported by his hand; but as

created again by an act of Almighty Power—rescued from vile bondage—discharged from a debt which you could never have paid—justified from a condemnation that must have sunk you into the depths of hell—raised to the privilege of prayer and praise, of obedience and love to the Lord Most High, and thus already conformed to the very disposition of angels in heaven! I could wish you to be saying a thousand and a thousand times to yourself, “I am none of my own, I am the Lord’s! Infinite honour, unequalled grandeur of condition, is included in this relation. May I know how to set a just value upon it!—I am the Lord’s, to have the benefit of his wisdom and unerring counsel.—I am the Lord’s, to derive from his might and power ability to do those things which by nature we cannot do, and get the mastery of our innate base tempers.—I am the Lord’s, to be preserved and defended by his tender and ever-watchful care, in this world of pits and snares, and seducing objects, and malignant spirits.—I am the Lord’s, to hear his voice and treasure up his Divine sayings, refusing to listen to the suggestions of my own deceitful heart, the maxims of mankind, and the false promises which sensitive pleasure and gaudy appearances are continually making, to prevail over me.—I am the Lord’s, to do the work He has given me by the allotment of his providence. This I am to be intent on discharging, with all diligence, humility, and cheerfulness; no less so than if I had come down from Him, having received from his own mouth an order, saying, ‘Go, and employ your time in the body in such a manner as I command you. Then shall you glorify me; and

when your work is done, I will confess you as a good and faithful servant before my Father and his holy angels!—I am the Lord's," may you say, "not only to live but to die unto Him! Having finished my education in his school, and been made meet for an inheritance with the saints in light, at death I am to enjoy the summit of all my wishes, in perfect knowledge and everlasting love." Thus, may our dear Eling be taught, and thus reckon herself to be alive to God, from the dead, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Then, in all the changing scenes of this mortal life, will you be provided for. In national calamities you may greatly suffer, yet not without solid consolation, knowing the Lord—whose you are, and whom you serve—sitteth above the water-floods, directs their motion, and decrees their effects. In trouble, He shall speak peace. When hurried away, alas! by some violent assault, or overtaken with a fault, his compassions towards you will not fail; He preserveth those that are his. In pain you will be cheerfully resigned, knowing it is the Lord who chasteneth all whom He loveth, and scourgeth them. In the loss of earthly friends, however dear to you, you will have a never-failing friend in Jesus of Nazareth. This, therefore, is the whole my heart can wish you. May you, living and dying, be the Lord's!

Advantage of the Study of Vocal Music.—True Religion Enforced.

CHRISTIAN FREDERICK SCHWARTZ, THE MISSIONARY, TO THE SON OF HIS DECEASED FRIEND, COLONEL WOOD.

Tanjore, Feb. 22d, 1780.

DEAR JOHN,—

I HAVE received your kind letter, and rejoiced that the son of my much-esteemed friend, who is now in eternity, goes on learning such things as will make him useful in human society. You learn Latin, geography, arithmetic, French, drawing, all which may be very serviceable to you and beneficial to your fellow-creatures. I intreat you, therefore, to be very diligent, and to spend your time in the best manner. I remember, that when I learnt vocal music, in my younger days, I did not think I should use it much, and, behold now, every morning and evening, when the Malabar children come to prayer, I teach them to sing in praise of their Redeemer. Every week they learn one hymn, for they are slow. Now I am well-pleased that I was instructed in vocal music; all things may become useful to us and others.

But then, my dear friend, our intention, our duties, must be well managed; or, in other words, our hearts must be truly mended. As you have spent many months and years in learning useful things, let your heart be now given over to your God, otherwise your learning will not prove beneficial; nay, what is deplorable, it may be abused to your detriment.

As you are so well placed, I beseech you by the mercy

of God, my dear J., to mind now the best, the one thing needful. Examine your heart, and whatever you find in it that is not agreeable to the will of God (and you will find much of that sort), acknowledge and bewail it before your God; intreat Him to wash and cleanse you from all your sins. Rest not till you find rest to your soul. Having obtained pardon and peace through Jesus, watch and pray that you may not lose what you have gained, but that you may rather grow daily in faith, love, and hope. In your conversation with young people, be very cautious. Their thoughts and speeches are often too frothy, aye, and even dangerous. Above all, try to gain strength, Divine strength; to overcome that sinful bashfulness, whereby many are ashamed to confess or practise what they otherwise approve of in their heart. If you read your Bible, and pray heartily to God, you will get strength every day to go on and prosper in his way. Our time is but short: eternity! awful eternity! is at hand! Let us, therefore, not trifle away our time, but let us seek the Lord, and his grace, his blessing, and his strength.

As you, dear J., are blessed with a pious mother, who is unspeakably desirous of promoting your welfare, I hope you will take all possible care to comfort and rejoice her heart. Though I have never seen your schoolmaster, it is cause enough for me to revere him, that I hear he is a faithful servant of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. May God bless him, and all that are under his care! So wishes

Your affectionate Friend,

C. F. SCHWARTZ.

*Danger of Worldly Intercourse.—Caution against
immoderate Study, to the Neglect of other important
Objects.*

THE REV. THOMAS SCOTT TO HIS SON WHEN AT COLLEGE.

November 2, 1795.

You have hitherto been kept greatly out of the way of worldly associates, and assure yourself you have lost nothing by it, for the more they are known, the clearer must be the conviction to every reflecting mind, that they can be of no advantage to a man, in any sense, without a tenfold greater disadvantage. Endeavour, therefore, to cultivate a courteous, kind, and cheerful disposition and behaviour towards all sorts of persons, avoiding moroseness, affectation, and singularity in things indifferent; but admit of no one to your familiarity, who does not seem to you, and to more experienced judges, to have the fear and love of God in his heart. Conciliate, by an amiable deportment, such as are strangers to the ways of religion, in order to allure them up to your ground, but take not a single step down upon their ground; lest, instead of your drawing them out of the mire, they draw you in. If you act consistently and prudently, and, by a proper attention to your studies, in subserviency to the one thing needful, and to future usefulness, secure a reputable standing in the college, the careless or vicious may affect to despise you, but in their hearts they will respect you. I say, a proper application, for I apprehend that too great exer-

tions are not only injurious to the health and spirits, tend to form a man to habits that are unpleasant, or to a kind of oddity, and exceedingly interfere with the growth of grace, and every holy affection in the soul; but they counteract their own end; blunt and overstretch the mental powers; and, after surprising progress for a time, incapacitate a person for making any progress at all. Ambition of distinction, more than love of knowledge, is the spur to this too eager course; but neither one nor the other should be your *primum mobile*, but a desire to acquire that competency of useful knowledge, which may fit you for glorifying God, and serving your generation. This will also teach you to take care of your health and spirits, to accustom yourself to corporal as well as mental exertion (the want of which is severely felt by most of our ministers who are academical men); to cultivate that kind of behaviour which may render you as acceptable as truth and conscientiousness will let a man be in this world—the want of which is one of my principal disadvantages;—and so to travel on at a sober rate, without over-pushing the horse at the beginning of the journey. Excessive eagerness in any particular study has also this disadvantage, that it is apt to render a man rather learned than wise, or even knowing; as over-eating renders a man full, but does not nourish him. They who read too much do not digest; they learn what others say, but they do not make it their own by reflection, or distinguish between the precious and the vile. But moderate study, with frequent pauses for reflection, useful conversation, and exercise, adds more to real knowledge, and leaves time to apply it

to practical uses. You certainly should not waste time, but stinting yourself to so much of this or the other every day may cramp you, render your mind uncomfortable, and unfit you for the exercises of religion, without which nothing else will really prosper. I would advise you frequently to write your own thoughts on subjects; and try to get the habit of doing it in Latin; it may be of use to you some time, beyond what you now perceive. But, whatever you read or write, compare all with the Bible; study divinity as a Christian, and as one intended to be a minister, and other things only in subordination to it, for this is your general, and your particular calling too. I pray the Lord to be your guard, guide, father, and comforter!

All Objects of Study inferior to the Knowledge of Christ.

THE REV. RICHARD CECIL TO HIS SON.

MY DEAR BOY,

I WAS much pleased with your letter to your sister, and indeed it gave great satisfaction to all our family, particularly to your mamma. We rejoice to see you speak so like a man, and to find that you so rightly estimate the value of your situation at school. For you are now a bee in a garden; nor can you possibly conceive what advantage you will reap from what you now gather; for though this is not the *whole* of what you are to learn, it is so essential a part that it will add power and lustre to the rest. I have been turning over a great number of

books at different shops, to find one to send you, but I never met with more disappointment.

I wish you to attend to a correct habit of writing. Thus far respecting literature: but let me, again and again, remind you that, great as that is, both that and everything else are but *dross to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ*. Upon that, all for time and eternity hangs! Pray, therefore, my dear child, to the Holy Spirit, to give you this life and light in your heart. I have sent you a sermon I have published, to the children of St. John's;—I wish you to read it carefully.

Confidence in Parents an important Feature in the Youthful Character.—Preparation for Eternity.

FROM THE SAME.

MY DEAR I—,

February, 1802.

YOUR mamma received your letter at the time I was at —. She is greatly satisfied that you so tenderly remembered what I said to you. The *truth* is, my dear, that your mind is greatly improved, and we cannot but notice it, and rejoice in it; and you may depend upon it we shall not fail to encourage a right disposition, to the utmost of our power. Your attention to me, particularly, has been marked by every one in the family, as well as myself.

There is a point you should never lose sight of—that when a youth takes ill courses, he begins to be shy of his parents; that is, of his only true and fast friends: he secretly forms connexions with broken, if not dangerous

reeds, and often plunges thereby into difficulties and disappointments, that his real friends cannot help him out of. I am rejoiced to see you take the contrary course.

I marked that wise and dutiful confidence with which you treated me, and that jealousy you had, as to how you stood in my mind. Watch against anything which may damp and impede this early friendship with your truest friend, and you will prosper. Our family and friends are well, except —, who is daily getting worse; but then what is that to her? She has fought the good fight, and is only waiting a little longer for her crown of glory. See what a blessed thing it is to be ready to meet what we all must meet. A king is a beggar, compared to a Christian.

Present my kindest regards to Mr. —. Be careful to keep up your character with that excellent man and friend. Be also assured that I remain,

Your very affectionate Father,

R. C.

Evil of Tattling.—Vices of the Tongue.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.,
TO MRS. W—, TO BE READ TO HIS CHILDREN.

I INCLOSE a letter from P., which breathes so friendly a spirit, that I think you and the girls ought to see it, in order to do justice to his kindness. I love to make people like each other better, and I often regret the tattling system, which prevails so generally, and from

which, I grieve to say, many of whom it would be uncharitable not to think favourably on the whole, are, nevertheless, not exempt. It is, indeed, a striking instance of our natural self-deception, that persons who would quite shrink from the idea of committing most of those crimes which are condemned in the Word of God, think little of the vices of the tongue. But any one who is duly jealous of himself will always watch most carefully against the sins which are the least unpopular in his own circle; and certainly the great evil of what is called the religious world is chatteration.

Pray let the girls see my letter, young people ought especially to guard against this fault, and, when I write to you, I consider myself as addressing them also. I beg you will write occasionally to — and —; their sisters should also write to them pretty frequently. I assure you, both from my own experience and from that of others, that, at their period of life, the frequent recurrence of home associations, and of sisterly affection, has a peculiarly happy effect, both on the character and manners. Farewell, with kindest remembrances to the dear girls.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Right Motive of Action.

THE SAME, TO HIS CHILDREN.

MY DEAREST —,

I HAVE not either time or eyesight to-day sufficient to

send you what, from its size, may deserve the name of a letter, but a lettering it may be called, and you know the old passage, "*Quoniam sua gratia parvis,*" etc., a maxim which, from my not being myself of extravagantly large dimensions, I may be supposed to consider a very reasonable proposition. I am glad to find (and it is quite a drop of balm in my heart when I hear of my dear boys going on well) that you are setting to work doggedly, as Dr. Johnson used to term it; but I like neither the word nor the idea. I hope my dear boy will act from a higher principle than one which I have seen in a poor animal in a team, when the taste of the waggoner's whip has made him resolutely set all his muscular force in action, to pull up a steep, as if determined to master it. But my dearest — will be prompted by a nobler set of motives —by a desire of pleasing God, and showing gratitude to his Saviour, and not grieving the Holy Spirit; of giving pleasure to a father and mother who are watching over his progress with tender solicitude.

I have been looking over some old papers till my heart is not a little affected. How year passes away after year, and first one person is snatched away, and then another, and many of them younger than myself! Little did I expect I should outlive so many, much more robust. But to persons of your age, as well as mine, the lesson is read, "Be thou also ready;" and then, my dearest boy, we shall never part: if we have made our calling and election sure, we shall never again be in the storm, but remain for ever in the enjoyment of the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore. I remembered that you would receive this on a Sunday, and therefore

permitted myself to fall into a serious strain. Indeed, I am always tempted to sing in this key when I am addressing one of my absent children, because, loving them so dearly, I am naturally drawn into the discussion of those topics in which their best interests are concerned. Above all things, my dear, attend to your private devotions. Beware of wandering thoughts. If you do but pray in earnest, I am sure all will be well. May God bless and preserve you !

Ever your affectionate Father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Prayer essential to Success in all Things.—Divine Help promised and given.

SIR FOWELL BUXTON TO HIS ELDEST SON, AT
TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Devonshire-street, May 15th, 1831.

MY mind has much turned towards you of late, and I have thought more than you might suppose of your approaching examination ; not that I am very solicitous about the result, except so far as your heart may be set on success. I should be very sorry to have you damped and disappointed ; but, for myself, I shall be just as well satisfied with you, if you are low in the last class, as if you are high in the first.

But I have a piece of advice to give you, with regard to the examination, which I am sure will, if attended to, be of service ; and if you remember it, and act upon it,

it will be useful whenever, during your future life, you are about to engage in anything of more than usual importance. Go to God in prayer ; lay before Him, as before your wisest and best friend, your care, your burthen, and your wishes ; consult Him, ask his advice, intreat his aid, and commit yourself to Him ; but ask especially that there may be this restraint upon the efficacy of your prayers—that his will, and not your wishes, may govern the result ; that what you desire may be accomplished, provided He sees it to be best, and not otherwise.

The experience of my life is, that events always go right when they are undertaken in the spirit of prayer. I have found assistance given, and obstructions removed, in a way which has convinced me that some secret power has been at work. But the assurance of this truth rests on something stronger than my own experience. Scripture is full of declarations of the prevalence and efficacy of prayer, and of the safety of those who resort to it. “ Commit thy way unto the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass.” “ This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles !” “ Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He will strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord !” It is not often I give you advice ; attend to it in this instance. Depend upon it, prayer is the best preparation you can have for your examination, and for everything else.

Advantage of Written Records of Early Study.

THE SAME.

Devonshire-street, April 3d, 1835.

MY DEAR FOWELL AND CHARLES,—C—— will tell you how I have been engaged this week. It has been very laborious work. I did not get to bed this morning till broad daylight, near seven o'clock; so I suppose you were up before I was down.

I have scarcely time to write, as I must be at the House of Commons again early, and there I shall be kept all night, I suppose; but I am quite equal to the exertion, and (I must confess it) somewhat cheered and exhilarated by the success of last night's effort. Work hard, my lads, and what you do learn, remember; fix it in your minds, and then write it in your common-place books. The passage of my speech last night which was best liked, was a quotation picked up by me some thirty years ago, when I was a youth—planted in my mind, and there it was when I wanted it. I have just been taking a delightful walk with your dear sister Priscilla, talking about slavery and savages, and slave-trade. Whenever I want to clear and brighten up my mind, I find nothing so effectual as an interchange of thought with her.

Earnestness essential to the Student's Success.—Punctuality, Decision, Method, important.—Religious Duties never to be neglected.

THE SAME TO ONE OF HIS SONS ON ENTERING
TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

MY DEAR ——,

IT is always a disappointment to me to be absent when my boys are at home ; but I particularly regretted being away last week, as I think I might have done something for your shooting before you went to college. I need not, I hope, tell you of the extreme interest I take in the launch of your little skiff on the ocean of life, and how heartily I desire that "soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave" may accompany your voyage, and that you may be safely piloted into the serene and lovely harbour prepared by the love of God. It is not often that I trouble my children with advice ; and never, I believe, unless I have something particular to say. At the present time I think I have that to say which is deeply important to your success in the business of life ; nay, its effects may extend beyond the grave. You are now a man, and I am persuaded that you must be prepared to hold a very inferior station in life to that which you might fill, unless you resolve, with God's help, that whatever you do you will do it well ; unless you make up your mind, that it is better to accomplish perfectly a very small amount of work, than to half-do ten times as much. What you do know, know thoroughly.

There are few instances in modern times of a rise equal to that of Sir Edward Sugden.

After one of the Weymouth elections, I was shut up with him in a carriage for twenty-four hours. I ventured to ask him what was the secret of his success; his answer was, "I resolved, when beginning to read law, to make everything I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week; but at the end of twelve months, my knowledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection."

Let the same masculine determination to act to some purpose, go through your life. Do the day's work to-day. At college I was extremely intimate with two young men, both of extraordinary talents. The one was always ahead of his tutor; he was doing this year the work of next year, and although upon many parts of the subject he knew more than his examiner, yet he contrived to answer what was proposed to him most scandalously;—while the other, by knowing perfectly what it was his business to know (though not confining himself to that), never, to the best of my recollection, failed to answer any question that was put to him.

Again, be punctual! I do not mean the merely being in time for lectures, &c.; but I mean that spirit out of which punctuality grows; that love of accuracy, precision, and vigour, which makes the efficient man; the determination that what you have to do shall be done, in spite of all petty obstacles, and finished off at once, and

finally. I believe I have told you the story of Nelson and his coachmaker, but you must hear it once more. When he was on the eve of departure for one of his great expeditions, the coachman said to him, "The carriage shall be at the door punctually at six o'clock." "A quarter before," said Nelson; "I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me."

How often have I seen persons who would have done well if they would but have acted up to their own sense of duty. Thankful I am to believe that conscience is the established ruler over your actions; but I want to enlarge its province, and to make it condescend to these, which may appear to you minor matters. Have a conscience to be fitting yourself for life, in whatever you do, and in the management of your mind and powers. In Scripture phrase, "Gird up the loins of your mind!"

Sheridan was an example of the want of this quality. In early life he got into a grand quarrel and duel, the circumstances of which were to his credit, (always excepting the fighting the duel,) but they were misrepresented. He came to town, resolved to set the British public right, and as Parry, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, was his friend, he resolved to do so through the channel of that paper. It was agreed between them that Sheridan, under a fictitious name, should write a history of the affair, as it had been misrepresented, and that he should subsequently reply to it in his own name, giving the facts of the case. The first part he accomplished, and there appeared in the *Chronicle*, a bitter

article against him, written in fact by himself; but he could never find time to write the answer, and it never was written. “The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting!”

All the men who have done things well in life have been remarkable for decision of character. Tacitus describes Julius Cæsar, as *Monstrum incredibilis celeritatis atque audaciæ*; and Bonaparte, having published to all the world the day on which he should leave Paris to meet Wellington at Waterloo, did actually start on that day; but he had so arranged matters, and travelled with such expedition, that he took the British army by surprise.

The punctuality which I desire for you involves and comprehends the exact arrangement of your time. It is a matter on which much depends: fix how much time you will spend upon each subject, and adhere all but obstinately to your plan. “Method,” says Cecil, “is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one!”

My letter I see is swelling into a sermon, but the day is fine, and Larry is waiting, so I must bring it to a close. Ponder well what I have said, and call on God to help you in arraying yourself in the qualities which I desire. If you mean to be the effective man, you must set about it earnestly, and at once. No man ever yet “yawned it into being with a wish;” you must make arrangements for it; you must watch it; you must notice when you fail, and you must keep some kind of journal of your failures.

But whatever negligence may creep into your studies,

or into your pursuits of pleasure or of business, let there be one point, at least, on which you are always watchful, always alive. I mean in the performance of your religious duties. Let nothing induce you, even for a day, to neglect the perusal of Scripture. You know the value of prayer; it is precious beyond all price. Never, never neglect it.

Well, my dear boy, or man, if you please! if I have been somewhat hard upon you in parts of this letter, you must excuse me, remembering that few have a father so deeply and tenderly attached as you have; or one, in general, more blind to defects, or more keen-eyed in the discernment of excellences.

Your most affectionate Friend and Father,
T. FOWELL BUXTON.

All Study rightly pursued tends to one End.

LORD TEIGNMOUTH TO HIS SONS.

Broadstairs, Isle of Thanet, Kent, August 17, 1807.

MY DEAR BOYS,—

I now begin for the first time, a correspondence with you; and I hope it will tend to confirm and improve that affection which we mutually feel. We are now separated, but I do not think the less of you on this account; on the contrary, a thousand things daily remind me of you both; and I should be happy to have you with me at Broadstairs, if I were not convinced of the necessity of leaving you under the tuition of Mr. Greaves, where

you have all the means of improvement which you would want here.

The great object of this short life is to fit us for a better, which will never end. God requires us to do our duty to God and man; but we cannot do it unless we first learn it, and I have, therefore, placed you in a situation where you may learn it. You cannot, perhaps, at present, see the connexion between Latin and Greek, and the duties you will have hereafter to discharge; but you will, if it please God to preserve your lives, feel the value and utility of the knowledge of these languages, and of the other instruction which you acquire at school; in the meantime, your duty now requires you to rely upon your parents, to obey your master, and to be diligent in taking advantage of the means of instruction afforded you. Our present separation may be short; but the time must come when we shall be separated for ever in this world, and, in the common course of nature, you will be left without parents.

Believe me, ever

Your affectionate Father.

A high Aim.—Reunion in another State.

LORD TEIGNMOUTH TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Feb. 26th, 1811.

Do not be contented with anything short of excellence, and whatever you learn, make yourself master of it. Ten

lines thoroughly comprehended are of more use than one hundred merely construed.

Above all, remember, every moment of your life, that you are the heir of eternity. What a delightful hope, my dear boy, to look forward to the enjoyment of each other's company in the society of purified saints, under the shadow of the throne of God our Saviour, in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there "are pleasures for evermore."

Happiness of a Christian Parent in the Religious Progress of his Child.—Worldly Pleasures.

LORD TEIGNMOUTH TO THE HON. CAROLINE D. SHORE.

Portman Square, Feb. 10th, 1826.

MY DEAR CAROLINE,

ALTHOUGH it is more than probable that I shall not be able to finish this letter to-day, from circumstances which it is unnecessary to detail, I cannot delay the expression of pleasure which your letter of the 14th has given me. I have long observed your endeavours to cultivate and improve your religious feelings; and I have the happiness to think that you have laboured with success; and I have only to say, Go on, as you have begun. To distrust ourselves is a most important step in religion; it is calculated to make us watchful over our own hearts, and to be more ardent and persevering in our prayers to God for Divine assistance, without which

we can never advance. Scott somewhere observes, “*That religion promises best, which begins with the conscience, and creates a watchfulness over the heart and tongue!*” And in his comments on the first Epistle of St. Peter, chap. i. ver. 17—21, he says, “The Christian’s best state of mind is a due proportion of humble fear and believing hope, and an equal distance from presumption and despondency. Without hope, a man is like a ship which hath no anchor; and without fear, he resembles one without ballast. The *fearless professor* is defenceless, and Satan takes him captive at his will; whilst he who despends has no heart to avail himself of his advantages, and surrenders at discretion.”

The above extract is copied from my memorandum book, into which I transcribe passages which I find impressive in the course of my reading: and I recommend you to make for yourself a little book of the same kind, for the reception of moral and religious observations, which will impress them on your memory, enable you to refer to them, when subjects relating to them are discussed, and to judge of your religious improvement. You are, as you observe, in a situation less exposed to temptation than if you were in London, where company and amusements, or the expectation of them and preparation for them, distract the mind, and indispose it for serious reflections; and the danger is the greater, because the things which produce this effect are in themselves innocent. The following is the opinion of a deeply pious and strong-minded woman, and though rather long, I cannot resist the temptation to copy it:—

“I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man,

who had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth and pleasure as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture. Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure, of the innocence or malignity of actions? take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself; and so on the contrary." I think the advice is excellent and well guarded, and an attention to it may enable you to resist the seduction of those temptations, which you prudently apprehend when you return to London. You cannot have a more satisfactory proof of advance in spirituality, than an increased earnestness and devotion in prayer. Happy is he who can find prayer a delight and a privilege! Leighton briefly observes— "He who knows how to pray, may be pressed, but cannot be overwhelmed."

I am, ever your affectionate Father.

On the Importance of Self-Examination.

LORD TEIGNMOUTH TO A YOUNG PERSON.

June 27th, 1809.

THE retirement of _____ affords you most ample means for reflection and meditation; and they cannot be

better applied than to the review of your past life. The practice of self-examination is absolutely necessary for our improvement; it is the injunction of moralists and divines, and it is equally the doctrine of heathens and Christians. No person was ever reformed until he had seriously and habitually exercised himself in this necessary duty; those who shut their eyes against their faults can never improve; "None are so deaf as those that will not hear," the proverb says: and we add, "None are so blind as those that will not see." I am, therefore, exhorting you to a duty of the first obligation and importance; and your happiness, both here and hereafter, is closely connected with a conscientious discharge of it. . . .

" You also know," to use the words of Dr. Paley, that "without the governing, preventing, inspiring, and assisting grace of God, we can do nothing!" Seek the first by prayer, to enable you to enter upon the review and examination which I recommend, with seriousness, accuracy, and effect. Beseech Him to assist you in discovering your heart to you, and to remove all prejudice which may conceal the truth from you. He knows your heart, and sees its inmost recesses: there is no concealment from Him: and although we may be hypocrites to the world and to ourselves—which is no uncommon case—we cannot be hypocrites in the sight of God."

Consider, first, how you have discharged your duties to Him. Have you been regular in your devotions? Are they devoutly performed? Are you in the habit of constantly seeking and constantly returning thanksgivings for his protection and the blessings which you enjoy? Is the desire to please Him the motive of your actions? Do

you fear to offend Him? Do you read the Scriptures with prayer to enable you to comprehend and obey them? And do you meditate upon what you read, with a view to fix it in your mind, and make it the rule of your conduct? Secondly, consider your duty to your parents, who are to you gods on earth. Have you been attentive to their wishes, commands, and instructions?—to please them, to anticipate their wishes, and to return the obligation of duty, gratitude, and affection?

All these are questions which you must answer before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, through whom your prayers must be offered, and by and through whom alone you can hope for acceptance with God. It is impossible to remain stationary in the Christian career; if we do not advance, we must recede.

Importance of committing Scripture to Memory.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HIS SON.

I FIND great benefit in storing my mind with passages in the Scripture; they supply subjects for meditation during my walks and sleepless nights. I will put down a few:—St. John's Gospel, the first fourteen verses; Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th verses of the second chapter: the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 10th verses of the Epistle of St. Peter; the 14th, and following verses to the end, of the 5th chapter of St. Paul to the Galatians; St. James, the 3rd chapter, the 15th and following verses to the end—*cum multis aliis*. The

need of Divine help, advantage of regular occupation, confidence between parents and children.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO THE HON. C. J. SHORE.

You have the invaluable advantage of a religious education, and are not ignorant of the doctrines and duties of that faith which alone can give you happiness here or hereafter. "Let him," however, "that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." We must ever distrust ourselves, and pray to God for his Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us, to suggest good resolutions, and to enable us to perform them. Our sufficiency is of Him; and whatever we attempt must be undertaken in dependence on his support, which will not be denied to serious and devout prayer.

Sir Matthew Hale, a most learned judge and sound Christian, used to say, that "the business of the week never went on well unless he began it with devout supplication for God's help." He was born A.D. 1600, and died in 1676.

I am particularly anxious that you should imitate the example of Sir William Jones, in making a regular allotment of your time and studies, by an adherence to which he attained his great proficiency in literature and science. By this means, when you enter your room, you will not be at a loss for immediate occupation. An artist who has several pieces of mechanism to execute, if

he wastes time in considering which he is to begin, when his hands ought to be employed, will find, at the close of the day, that he has made little progress. *Magnum vectigal est parsimonia*, is a maxim as applicable to your time as to your purse. If indolent amusements and idle dissipations are permitted to occupy the hours which ought to be devoted to study, distinction will never be acquired. Relaxation leads to inactivity, that is, an incapacity for exertion, and, finally, to indifference or despair. A college life, to an idle man, if he retains any conscience, must be an irksome situation. Experience and observation have uniformly proved that occupation in the line of duty is a great—I may say an indispensable—source of happiness: it is the dispensation of heaven. In the allotment of your time, you will make an allowance for recreation and exercise; for the vigour of the mind materially depends on the temperament of the body. The habit of early rising will improve your constitution and intellect; endeavour, my dear Charles, to acquire it. And whilst I am on the article of habits, let me recommend you to read Paley's chapter on that subject. Whilst I am writing this, the words of St. Paul come forcibly over my mind:—"Paul planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase!" To Him my prayers are daily offered for you. Consider me ever, my dear Charles, as your best friend; tell me, without reserve, your wishes, your wants, your feelings; in me you will ever find a disposition to gratify every reasonable desire. You are young and inexperienced. I can make allowances for the errors of youth. Consult me with a freedom you would

use to a friend of your own years. Avail yourself of the benefit of my experience, and confide in my affection.

Your ever affectionate Father.

*All Opportunities for Acquiring Useful Knowledge
to be embraced.*

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE HON. C. J. SHORE.

* * * * * Mark, learn, and inwardly digest all you see and hear! Chance and opportunity have opened a volume to you, which you may never have again an opportunity of perusing. Study it whilst you can; and, when you return to England, you may resume your academical studies. Lose no opportunity of acquiring information. "Knowledge," says Bacon, "is power;" and all knowledge, at some period or another, is useful.

A right Perception of the Beauties of Nature.

REV. LEGH RICHMOND TO HIS DAUGHTER,

Keswick, Oct. 16, 1815.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—

THE exquisite beauty and sublimity of this country almost makes a pen move of itself. Never did I pass so beautiful a day as this at the lakes. I shall sing the praises of October as the loveliest of months. This

morning, at six o'clock, I was walking on the banks of Windermere, to catch a sunrise. I had everything I could wish, and observed the progress of day with delight. The mysterious rolling of clouds across the hills announced the first influence of the sun. Tints the most beauteous skirted the eastern clouds; those on the west caught them as by sympathy. Various patches of mountains soon gleamed with the reflection of the yet unseen luminary; and such innumerable vicissitudes of light and shade, and *chiaro scuro* filled the scene as no tongue can describe. The lake, in all its length] of thirteen miles, lay beneath me, with its thirty islands. I heard the early lowing of the cows, the bleating of the sheep, the neighing of the horses, the twittering of the birds, the rustling of the breeze, the rippling of the water, and dashing of the oar, in gentle kind of harmony! The sun advanced, and threw a blaze of magnificent lustre over this Paradisaical landscape. I soon crossed over the lake, and passed through rich scenes of wonder and loveliness. I saw Coniston and Grasmere Lakes, under circumstances of peculiar advantage. Clusters of mountains and lesser hills, clothed with crags, brown fern, red lichens, green grass, purple heath, bushes, barren gulleys, cascades, wild streaks, rolling mists, bright sunshine, &c., presented incessant variety—hill towered above hill—Alpine peaks reared their heads—groves filled the valleys, and cottages were sprinkled in wild profusion.

I dined at a little romantic inn at the foot of the mountain Helvellyn. The lake of Leatheswater extended its four miles' length close by. My parlour

window faced the great hill; a mountain stream fell from a great height, tumbling with a murmuring sound down into the vale.

Something dimmed the pane of glass through which I viewed it. On inspection I found the following lines, written with a diamond :—

“ Flow, mountain streamlet, swiftly flow,
And fertilize the vale below;
Sweet emblem of that gracious love
Which pours down blessings from above ;
The stream of mercy, Lord ! is thine,—
The lowly heart that feels it, mine ! ”

On another pane was written—

“ These lovely scenes before thine eyes,
Form a terrestrial paradise ;
But this shall quickly pass away ;
Then seek one in eternal day.”

Thence I advanced to Keswick. Before me stood the giants of the scenery—Skiddaw and Saddleback—in sublime beauty, not to be expressed. Their length, their breadth, their height, their wildness, their roughness, their smoothness, their surface, their profile, their *tout ensemble*, most grand, most interesting ! At length the lakes of Derwentwater and Bathenthwaites burst upon the eye with all the charms that painters and poets love, and which Christians know how to love far better than either. The scene from a hill, a mile on the road from Keswick, so much exceeds the power of my pen to describe, that I can only say: “ How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord, the Creator ! ”

I watched the moon decline on the lake, and then

studied the whole scene by the finest starlight I ever beheld. Mars is now in the east, like Jupiter; yea, bright as a moon. The Great Bear hangs pendant exactly over Skiddaw, and Mars rises triumphantly over the summit of Saddleback; the Galaxy sweeps over the hemisphere, white as milk, and clear as moonlight. All is solemn, silent, peaceful. I write you this faint breathing of expression. Could you copy these scenes, I should be proud of your company here; I trust some day you will.

This morning, as I stood on an eminence, looking down on the exquisitely lovely lake of Grasmere, environed by its amphitheatre of mountains, a momentary shower produced a rainbow: it extended from hill to hill over the valley, and seemed like a bridge for angels to pass over from one district of Paradise to another:—

“And as they pass, let angels sing
The wonders of Creation’s King:
And while they tune their harps to praise,
I’d gladly catch their solemn lays,
Unite with theirs my feeble tongue,
And give to gratitude my song.”

On Reading the Holy Scriptures.

MRS. HAWKES TO HER GOD-CHILD.

I HAVE not time to say all I intended on the subject of reading the Bible. The best description of my views which I can give at present, is that we should not only

read in order to know what we should be and do, as real Christians; nor only to know what God has done and will do, in the relation in which He stands to us as his creatures, and particularly as his children:—but the Scripture is a glass wherein He has, in a most glorious manner, given us a revelation of Himself—of His perfections—of His infinite eternity of being; we should therefore, at seasons, delight ourselves with tracing out the different features of His glorious majesty. In thus reverently studying the Divine character, our minds will obtain larger apprehensions of the various perfections of God; and the discoveries which the Holy Spirit will help us to make, will cause our hearts to burn within us; our faith, love, and confidence will be increased, and a fresh interest will be given to everything we see, because we shall trace everything upwards, and say, “Here I see the touch of his hand.” The more we behold of Deity, the lower we shall sink in humility and self-abasement; and selfishness—hateful, narrow selfishness, will be lost.

What I have ever found to be my stay through every dark and dismal cogitation is, to get my memory stored with Scripture. When thoughts rush in I do not parley with them, but instantly read, or repeat, some verses of the precious Bible, which I always find an answer for everything. I do, indeed, through the help of the blessed Spirit, find the Scripture to be a sacred exorcist, that soon puts a legion of fears and miseries to flight; mightily pulling down the strongholds of sin and Satan; “casting down imaginations,” and every rebellious thought; and when mixed with prayer and appropriating

faith, effectual to perfect, establish, and settle the soul in peace. Every passage I read and meditate upon, furnishes so many distinct topics for prayer. This I do find to be the secret that obliterates the power and being of second causes; this fills up every aching void in the solitary heart, this turns every wilderness into a pleasant garden, unravels all dark problems; and teaches us to be good arithmeticians, and "to reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Oh! the wonderful power of heart piety, and the wonderful peace also! How does walking with God, like Enoch, elevate, expand, enrich, ennable, compose, and regulate the mind! How much interest does it give to every hour, every moment of the day! There is no aching void, no yawning vacuum, no tedious *ennui* in the *living* Christian's life. All is pursuit, advancement, possession. Every object is sublime—animating, filling, eternal. How sweet to begin each day with—"Lord Jesus! into Thy hands I commit my spirit, my body, my thoughts, my words and actions." "Peace and communion with God is given," as the apostle says, "at all times and in all places." Every event and occurrence may be made a means in the hand of the Holy Spirit of promoting our peace. May the blessed God and our Saviour keep thee, my god-daughter, as the apple of His eye!

Prays your affectionate,

S. H.

P R A Y E R S

FOR THE USE OF

A CHRISTIAN STUDENT.

PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

O LORD, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life; in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death; the light, without which there is darkness; the way, without which there is wandering; the truth, without which there is error; the life, without which there is death; say, Lord, "Let there be light," and I shall see light and eschew darkness; I shall see the way, and avoid wandering; I shall see the truth, and shun error; I shall see life and escape death. Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death; and direct my feet in the way of peace.

For the Understanding of God's Word.

KING EDWARD SIXTH'S PRIMER.

O LORD, as Thou alone art the author of the Holy Scriptures, so likewise can no man, although he be

never so wise, politic, and learned, understand them, except he be taught by Thy Holy Spirit, which alone is the schoolmaster to lead the faithful into all truth. Vouchsafe, therefore, I most humbly beseech Thee, to breathe into my heart Thy blessed Spirit, which may renew the senses of my mind, open my wits, reveal unto me the true understanding of Thy holy mysteries, and plant in me such a certain and infallible knowledge of Thy truth, that no subtle persuasion of man's wisdom may pluck me from Thy truth; but that, as I have learned the true understanding of Thy blessed will, so I may remain in the same continually; come life, come death, unto the glory of Thy blessed Saviour! Amen.

For a Life agreeable to our Knowledge.

KING EDWARD SIXTH'S PRIMER.

As I have prayed unto Thee, O Heavenly Father, to be taught the true understanding of Thy blessed Word by Thy Holy Spirit, so I most entirely beseech Thee to give me grace to lead a life agreeable to my knowledge. Suffer me not to be of the number of those who profess that they know God with their mouth, but deny Him with their deeds. Let me not be like unto that son which said unto his father that he would labour in his vineyard, and yet laboured nothing at all, but went abroad loitering idly; make me rather like unto that good and fruitful land which yieldeth again her seed with great increase, that men, seeing my good works, may glorify Thee, my Heavenly Father.

A PRAYER PREFIXED TO SOME EDITIONS OF THE
EARLY ENGLISH VERSIONS.

O GRACIOUS GOD and Most Merciful Father, which hast vouchsafed us the rich and precious jewels of Thy Holy Word, assist us by Thy Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts, to our everlasting comfort, to reprove us, to renew us, according to thine own image; to build us up and edify us, unto the perfect building of Thy Christ; sanctifying and increasing in us all heavenly virtues. Grant this, O Heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake.

AT THE END OF DEAN NOWELL'S CATECHISM.

WE give from our hearts the greatest thanks to Thee, O God, the Father of Light, Giver of all good things, because Thou hast given this mind to our parents and guardians that, in an age which is most flexible and most convenient for learning whatsoever is most excellent, they committed us unto the discipline of useful learning, humbly praying unto Thee, that Thou wouldest not permit their good hope concerning us, and the best part of our age, to perish through our slowness of learning, negligence, and indolence. And because our watchfulness, industry, and study are of no profit, without Thy Divine guidance, deign so to enlighten our minds and understandings with Thy heavenly rays, and so fill us with such desires and love of useful learning, wisdom, and virtue, and so endue us with such teachableness to

understand, and memory to retain what we have understood, that, in our childhood and youth being liberally trained in sound learning, excellent arts, and the precepts of virtue, we may become pious and learned, useful both to the State and to Thy Church, to the spreading of the glory of Thy most holy name. We ask these things of Thee, Father of Heaven, in the name of Thy holy Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, entreating that thou wouldest grant us these things for his sake. But to Thee, with the same Thy Son, and the Holy Spirit, be all praise and glory rendered for ever and ever. Amen.

ANOTHER.

GRANT, O Lord God, Heavenly Father, that, being filled with Thy Holy Spirit, and setting before our eyes for our imitation the most bright and shining example of Thy well-beloved Son and most holy Child Jesus Christ, we may, in this time of our childhood and youth, apply ourselves wholly to the study of good learning and virtue, and conform ourselves to Thy will. Grant also, O Lord, that as we grow in age we may advance daily more and more in knowledge, wisdom, and virtue, acquiring and gaining for ourselves both the favour and love of pious men, and Thy most heavenly favour and love, wherein consists our highest happiness. All this we ask through the same, Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, to whom, with Thee and with the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory ascribed for ever. Amen.

Prayer for Christian Students.

O LORD, who by Thy holy Apostle, hast taught us to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus and to Thy glory, give Thy blessing, we pray Thee, to this our daily work, that we may do it in faith, and heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men. All our powers of body and mind are Thine, and we would fain devote them to Thy service. Sanctify *them* and the work in which they are engaged; let us not be slothful, but fervent in spirit, and do Thou, O Lord, so bless our efforts that they may bring forth in us the fruits of true wisdom. Strengthen the faculties of our minds, and dispose us to exert them; but let us always remember to exert them for Thy glory, and for the furtherance of Thy kingdom; and save us from all pride, and vanity, and reliance upon our own power or wisdom. Teach us to seek after truth, and enable us to gain it; but grant that we may ever speak the truth in love, that while we know earthly things, we may know Thee; through and in Thy Son Jesus Christ. Give us this day Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be Thine in body and Spirit in all our work, and in all our refreshments, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

DR. ARNOLD.

Prayer for the Use of a Christian Student.

ALMIGHTY GOD, the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, I desire with fervent

gratitude to bless Thee, that Thou hast made me a rational and immortal creature. Pardon me, through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for not having more diligently cultivated my understanding and improved my time, and help me by Thy Holy Spirit to be more in earnest in acquiring all sacred and useful knowledge for the future, ever remembering that I am accountable to Thee for the cultivation of my mind, and the improvement of my opportunities.

May I first of all study the holy Scriptures with a meek and lowly mind, as the only book which can make me wise unto salvation : and may I be kept by Thy gracious influence from all error, and led into all truth. Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.

Make me to hunger and thirst after knowledge, and at the same time preserve me from a vain curiosity and the pride of intellect. May I grow in grace as I grow in knowledge, and ever seek to employ all the information I acquire to the glory of God, in my own improvement and the good of my fellow-creatures.

In studying the works of science may I recognise, O God, in the laws of the universe, the proofs of Thine existence, and the display of Thy almighty power and boundless wisdom, and thus learn to reverence Thine infinite majesty.

When I study the lives of great and good men, inspire me with a holy desire to imitate their excellence and to avoid their faults, following them only so far as they followed Christ. Grant me, O God, clearness of judgment in all things, to discriminate between truth and

error; firmness of principle, to reject what is evil, however specious and plausible; and strength of mind to return, and resoluteness of will to practise what is good.

And now I thank Thee, most merciful Father, for all the advantages of my education, and all the opportunities of improvement with which I have been favoured; and pray that I may have grace so to use them as that I may be made holy, happy, and useful. May I obtain forgiveness of all my sins, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and be brought at length to thy heavenly kingdom, where I shall know even as I am known, and no longer see Thee as through a glass darkly, but face to face. To God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be everlasting praise. Amen.

REV. JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

Prayer before Confirmation.

O LORD GOD, I am a poor, sinful creature, born in sin, a child of wrath and sinning against Thee every day. For Thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, have mercy upon me and make me a new creature in Him. I bless Thee that by Thy goodness I was early given up to Thee in baptism, and engaged to be Thy child and servant for ever. Oh, pardon my ignorance and forgetfulness of this solemn engagement, and the many ways in which I have broken it in thought, word, and deed. Pardon all my sins; all the wicked or idle words I have said, the wrong desires I have felt, the bad tempers I have given way to, and the evil actions I have done. Oh, may the

blood of Jesus Christ cleanse me from all sin, and now assist me in taking upon myself the vow and promise of my baptism.

REV. C. BRIDGES.

A Prayer for a young Person after Confirmation.

O INFINITE and ever-glorious God, I bless Thy great name, that Thou hast condescended to encourage and command sinners to enter into covenant with Thyself. I adore Thee for Thy condescension in permitting one, the most unworthy of Thy creatures, to approach Thee in the presence of Thy Church, and join myself publicly to the number of Thy faithful people: Oh, forgive the infirmities which accompanied my performance of this weighty duty; and accept my praises for every good thought, every holy desire, and every sincere purpose of my mind in it. Help me, O God, ever to keep on my heart a sense of the unspeakable blessings which have been bestowed upon me. May I consider how solemnly I have consecrated myself to Thee, as a living sacrifice. Do Thou, O Lord, confirm me in these vows. Grant that the prayers of Thy Church may be heard in heaven, Thy dwelling-place. I desire most solemnly to renew the engagements I have publicly made. I would take Thee in Jesus Christ as my God, my Father, my portion, and my all. Oh, endue me daily, more and more, with Thy Holy Spirit. Grant me inward strength for doing and suffering Thy own will. Unite me continually, more and more, to the mystical body of Thy dear Son. May I

walk in newness of life; may I be preserved from the sinful practices of the world, from the corrupt desires of the flesh, and from the malicious works of the devil. May I practise all such good works as become my holy profession; may I never draw back from Thy ways. May I be advancing in Thy true faith and fear. Oh, give me to abound in all the fruits of Thy Holy Spirit. Enable me to abide in Christ my Saviour, as the branch abideth in the vine. Assist me to glorify thy name, to adorn Thy Gospel, and to fulfil all the various duties to which I may be called. Grant me grace to be spiritual, humble, circumspect, resigned, cheerful, and consistent in my whole conversation and conduct. And oh, vouchsafe to me, by Thy mercy, that I may so pass through things temporal, that finally I lose not the things eternal. These mercies I humbly implore in the name, &c.

BISHOP WILSON.

Prayer for Divine Teaching.

FATHER of Lights and God of all Grace: Thou hast promised that Thou wilt give wisdom to them that ask Thee. Feeling my own ignorance, I now ask of Thee to impart, out of the fulness of Him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom, the gift of heavenly love. I live in a world full of error and full of sin, and to whom can I look with any certainty but unto Thee, O Lord? Enlighten my understanding, purify my affections, and guard me from error. Let not the wicked delude me,

and let not the mistakes even of the righteous lead me astray. I am as fallible and liable to error as others, leave me not therefore to myself, but enable me to adhere to Thy word, and give me the abundance of Thy Spirit to guide me into all truth, and make me wise unto salvation, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

For Grace to walk in the Path of Duty.

ENABLE us, Lord, to fulfil our duties to Thee and to one another. Let us feel that the path of duty is the path of happiness: make us quick to discern it, and bold and stedfast to pursue it; knowing that the Lord is our helper, and that Thou art the rewarder of all them who diligently seek Thee, we would go on fearlessly in a straightforward course, seeking Thy glory; but let us never, in the boldness of the true disciples of Christ, forget the humility and meekness which becomes us. Enable us to give up and mortify all our self-wisdom, self-will, and self-righteousness, and to be ever ready to concede to others, where concession does not interfere with the glory of our Saviour, looking to Him who pleased not himself, but endured the contradiction of sinners, and so attained the joy set before Him. Hear us for his name's sake. Amen.

REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

Summary of Things to be sought of God before Study.

I DESIRE to thank Thee, my God and Father in Christ Jesus, for this and every other opportunity of improvement Thou hast given me. May the opportunity Thou hast given me be blest of Thee. Enable me to receive it with thanksgiving, and sanctify it to me by the word of God and prayer. Oh, let me know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and other things, just so far as may be for my good and Thy glory, and no further. I thank Thee that the meanest employment is acceptable in Thy sight, when done in the name of the Lord Jesus. May I set about this in his name, and in his strength, and to his glory; may I not once seek my own things in it, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. Let me no longer lean to my own understanding; but may I so acknowledge Thee in all my ways, that thou mayest establish my thoughts and direct my paths. Suffer me not to be wise in my own conceit, nor vainly puffed up in my fleshly mind. Make me to cease from mine own wisdom. Be Thou my wisdom.

MISS GRAHAM.

PRAYER OF LORD TEIGNMOUTH ON THE DEPARTURE
OF HIS SON, THE HON. F. J. SHORE, FOR INDIA;

*Exemplifying the spirit with which a Christian Parent
commits his Child to the care of his Heavenly Father.*

To Thee, O God of all mercies, and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, I now consign my child, most humbly and fervently beseeching Thee to protect him by Thy Providence, and guide and direct him by thy grace. Oh! let the Holy Spirit teach him the truth as it is in Jesus; and strengthen him in the faith and love of it! Visit not the sins of the father upon him; but give him grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and make him watchful over his own heart, circumspect in all conduct, and careful to avoid the seduction of bad example. Impress his soul with a constant sense of his dependance upon Thee for all the good that he has or hopes for, and make him grateful for all that he receives and enjoys; for all the dangers he escapes; and for all the temptations he avoids and resists. Let him never forget that Thy holy eye is ever upon him, and that Thou seest the secrets of all hearts and knowest all things. Give him grace to read Thy Holy Word; to meditate upon it, and take it as "a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path." Pour out Thy Spirit upon him, and make him Thine by adoption and regeneration; and whatsoever of the things of this world he may want, let him not be destitute of the one thing needful; but may he have Thy grace, and the portion of Thy children. Be Thou a gracious Father unto him, instructing, admonishing, and reproofing him in all mercy; and a merciful Provider for him in all estates, all affairs, and events of his life. But especially, O God, I beseech Thee take care of his soul; that when he shall be deprived of all here, he may, through Thy mercy in Christ Jesus, be taken into the glorious kingdom above, there to serve, praise, and adore Thee, with

the saints made perfect and the heavenly host, to all eternity. Hear me, O Heavenly Father, for the sake of Him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us ! And glory be to Thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end.*

TEIGNMOUTH, ANN. ÆTAT 66½.

Sunday, May 24th, 1818.

* This beautiful prayer should be often read and highly prized by every young person who possesses the inestimable blessing of Christian parents. They will thereby be assisted in forming a proper appreciation of their privileges.

APPENDIX A.

VIEW OF THE QUALITIES WHICH CONSTITUTE A WELL-REGULATED MIND,

And which ought to be aimed at by those who desire either their own mental culture, or that of others who are under their care.

“ 1. THE cultivation of a habit of steady and continuous attention ; or of properly directing the mind to any subject which is before it, so as fully to contemplate its elements and relations. This is necessary for the due exercise of every other mental process, and is the foundation of all improvement of character, both intellectual and moral.

“ 2. Nearly connected with the former, and of equal importance, is a careful regulation and control of the succession of our thoughts. This remarkable faculty is very much under the influence of cultivation, and on the power so acquired depends the important habit of regular and connected thinking. It is primarily a voluntary act ; and, in the exercise of it in different individuals, there are the most remarkable differences. In some, the thoughts are allowed to wander at large, without any

regulation, or are devoted only to frivolous and transient objects; while others habitually exercise over them a stern control, directing them to subjects of real importance, and prosecuting these in a regular and connected manner. This important habit gains strength by exercise, and nothing, certainly, has a greater influence in giving tone and consistency to the whole character.

"The leading objects to which the thoughts may be directed, are referable to three classes. 1. The ordinary engagements of life, or matters of business, with which every man is occupied in one degree or another, including concerns of domestic arrangement, personal comfort, and necessary recreation. Each of these deserves a certain degree of attention, but this requires to be strictly guided by its real and relative importance; and it is entirely unworthy of a sound and regulated mind to have the attention solely or chiefly occupied with matters of personal comfort, or of trivial importance, calculated merely to afford amusement for the passing hour. 2. Visions of the imagination, built up by the mind itself, when it has nothing better to occupy it. No habit can be more opposed to a healthy condition of the mental powers; and none ought to be more carefully guarded against by every one who would cultivate the high acquirement of a well-regulated mind. 3. Entirely opposed to the latter of these modes, and distinct also in a great measure from the former, is the habit of following out a connected chain of thought on subjects of importance and of truth, whenever the mind is disengaged from the proper and necessary attention to the ordinary transactions of life. The purpose of these observations

is simply to impress the value of that regulation of the thoughts, by which they can always find an occupation of interest and importance, distinct from the ordinary transactions of life, or the mere pursuit of frivolous engagements; and also totally distinct from that destructive habit by which the mind is allowed to run to waste, amid visions and fictions unworthy of a waking man.

“ 3. The cultivation of an active, inquiring state of mind, which seeks for information from every source that comes within its reach, whether in reading, conversation, or personal observation. With this state of mental activity, ought to be closely connected, attention to the authenticity of facts so received; avoiding the two extremes of credulity and scepticism.

“ 4. The habit of correct association;—that is, connecting facts in the mind according to their true relations, and to the manner in which they tend to illustrate each other. This, as we have formerly seen, is one of the principal means of improving the memory, particularly the kind of memory which is an essential quality of a cultivated mind; namely, that which is founded, not upon incidental connexions, but on true and important relations.

“ 5. A careful selection of the subjects to which the mind ought to be directed. These are, in some respects, different in different persons, according to their situations in life; but there are certain objects of attention which are peculiarly adapted to each individual; and there are some which are equally interesting to all.

“ It is related of Sir Isaac Newton, that, when he was questioned respecting the mental qualities which formed

the peculiarity of his character, he referred it entirely to the power which he had acquired of continuous attention. ‘When he was asked,’ says Mr. Whewell, ‘how he made his discoveries,’ he answered, ‘By always thinking about them ;’ and, at another time he declared, that, if he had done anything, it was due to nothing but industry and patient thought. ‘I keep the subject of my inquiry constantly before me, and wait till the first dawning opens gradually, by little and little, into a full and clear light.’

“6. A due representation and proper control of the imagination; that is, restricting its range to objects which harmonize with truth, and are adapted to the real state of things with which the individual is or may be connected. We have seen how much the character is influenced by this exercise of the mind; that it may be turned to purposes of the greatest moment, both in the pursuits of science, and in the cultivation of benevolence and virtue; but that, on the other hand, it may be so employed as to debase both the moral and intellectual character.

“7. The cultivation of calm and correct judgment; applicable alike to the formation of opinions and the regulation of conduct. This is founded, as we have seen, upon the habit of directing the attention, distinctly and steadily, to all the facts and considerations bearing upon a subject; and it consists in contemplating them in their true relations, and assigning to each the degree of importance of which it is worthy.

“The mental qualities which have been referred to in the preceding observations, constituting an active,

attentive, and reflecting mind, should be carefully cultivated by all who desire their own mental improvement. The man who has cultivated them with adequate care, habitually exercises a process of mind, which is equally a source of improvement and of refined enjoyment. Does a subject occur to him, either in conversation or reflection, in which he feels that this knowledge is deficient, he commences without delay, an eager pursuit of the necessary information.

"8. For a well-regulated understanding, and particularly for the application of it to inquiries of the highest import, there is indispensably necessary a sound condition of the moral feelings. It is impossible to lose sight of the place which it holds in the general harmony of the mental functions required for constituting that condition, of greater value than any earthly good, which is strictly to be called a well-regulated mind."

ABERCROMBIE.

APPENDIX B.

HABITS DESIRABLE FOR THE STUDENT TO FORM.

"1. HAVE a plan laid beforehand every day. These plans ought to be maturely formed the evening previous, and on rising in the morning, again looked at and immediately entered upon. It is astonishing how much more we accomplish in a single day (and of what else is life made up?), by having the plan previously marked out.

"2. Acquire a habit of untiring industry. Should you be so unfortunate as to suppose you are a genius, and that things will come to you, it would be well to undeceive yourself as soon as possible. Make up your mind that industry must be the price of all you obtain, and at once begin to pay down. Diligence in employments of less consequence, is the most successful introduction to greater enterprises. It is a matter of unaffected amazement to see what industry alone will accomplish.

"3. Cultivate perseverance. By perseverance, I mean a stedfastness in pursuing the same study, and carrying out the same plans from week to week.

"4. Cultivate the habit of punctuality. There is no man living, who might not be a punctual man, and yet there are few that are so, to anything like the degree to which they ought to attain. The punctual man can do twice as much, at least, as another man, with twice the ease and satisfaction to himself, and with equal satisfaction to others.

"5. Become an early riser. Few ever lived to a great age, and fewer still ever became distinguished, who were not in the habit of early rising. You rise late, and of course commence your business at a late hour, and everything goes wrong all day. Franklin says, that 'he who rises late may trot all day, and not have overtaken his business at night.'

"6. Be in the habit of endeavouring to learn something from every man with whom you meet. The observance or neglect of this rule will make a wonderful difference in your character, long before the time you are forty

years old. All act upon it more or less, but few do it as a matter of habit and calculation.

"7. Form fixed principles on which you think and act. Do not examine a subject in order to get some general notion of it, but, if now in haste, wait till you can do it thoroughly. No matter what it be, of great importance or small—if it be worth examining at all, do it thoroughly, and do it once for all, so that whenever the subject shall again come up, your mind will be settled and at rest.

"It is the possession of established and unwavering principles that makes a man a firm character. These principles relate to right and wrong, and indeed to everything about which the judgment has to balance probabilities. Do not be hasty in coming to a conclusion. Young persons generally err more by being precipitate than from want of judgment. If they will only give themselves time to weigh the matter, their conclusions will usually be correct.

"8. Be simple and neat in your personal habits.

"9. May I request my readers to acquire the habit of doing everything well? 'How is it that you do so much?' said one in astonishment at the efforts and success of a great man. 'Why, I do but one thing at a time, and try to finish it once for all.' Do not hurry anything so that you know not what you do, or do not know certainly about it, and have to trust to vague impressions. What we call a superficial character is formed in this way, and none who are not careful to form and cherish the habit of doing everything well, can expect to be anything else than superficial.

“ 10. Make constant efforts to be master of your temper. It will require no small exertion on your part, to become master of yourself. He that is master of his own spirit is a hero indeed. Nothing grows faster by indulgence, than the habit of speaking to a companion hastily: it soon becomes so fixed that it lasts through life. In order to avoid it, cultivate manliness of character; be frank and open-hearted; not merely appear so, but really be so. There is an openness, a nobleness of soul, about some men, which is quickly discovered, and as highly valued.

“ 11. Cultivate soundness of judgment. When a prejudice has once entered your mind against a man or an author, it is hard to eradicate it; it warps the judgment and makes you partial; and if this habit be indulged, the mind soon becomes habituated to act from prejudice rather than judgment.

“ 12. Treatment of parents, friends, and companions.—I hope it will appear that I am not out of place in recommending you to make the proper treatment of friends a habit; whether you intend this or not, it will become so.

“ No one can long be your friend for whom you have not a decided esteem. Prudence is a prime quality in a friend:—

“ ‘ Hast thou a friend? thou hast indeed,
A rich and large supply—
Treasure to serve your every need,
Well managed, till you die.’ ”

Dale's Student's Guide.

LIST OF BOOKS,

SUITED TO THE USE OF A YOUNG STUDENT.

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“ With regard to the advantages derived from books :
First—*Reading forms your style.*
Secondly—*Reading furnishes the mind with knowledge.*
Thirdly—*Reading stimulates and puts your mental energies into operation.*”—DALE.

“ Remember that to desire to know—to know, is curiosity. To desire to know—to be known, is vanity. To desire to know—to sell your knowledge, is covetousness. To desire to know—to edify oneself, is prudence. To desire to know—to edify others, is charity.”—
ST. BERNARD.

“‘ To desire to know—to glorify God, is religion.’
Added by a saint seven hundred years afterwards.”

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Scott’s Bible.

Henry’s Bible.

Doddridge's Family Expositor.

Abridged Commentary of the Tract Society, from Henry, Scott, and others. *Most valuable to the Young Student.*

Horne's Introduction or Compendium.

Abridgment of ditto. *A most valuable work.*

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Nicholl's Help to reading the Bible.

Companion to the Bible.—Tract Society.

Either of the four above-mentioned works are well suited for private use or family study.

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Brown's Dictionary of the Bible.

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Gregory's Letters.

Keith's Fulfilment of Prophecy.

History of Palestine.—Kitto.

Connection of the Old and New Testament.—Tract Society.

Calcott's Scriptural Herbal.

Scripture Natural History.

Paley's Evidences of Christianity.

Wilson's Lectures on Evidences.

Horne, on the Psalms.

Bridges, on the 119th Psalm.

——— on the Proverbs.

Leighton, on St. Peter.

Clarke's Promises.

Robinson's Scripture Characters.

Burder's Oriental Customs and Literature.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Milner's History of the Church of Christ, with Continuation by Scott. 7 vols.

Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History.

D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation.

Works of Josephus.

Fox's Acts and Monuments.

Burnet's History of the Reformation.

History of the Church of Christ, by the Tract Society.
6 vols.

The Lollards, and Days of Queen Mary.

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Short's Church History.

Southey's Book of the Church.

Barth's Church History. Tract Society. *Invaluable as
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Adam's Religious World displayed.

Smith's History of Missions.

Key to the Prayer Book. *A very valuable work.*

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Ecclesiastical Chronology. By the Rev. J. E. Riddle.

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

Paley's Natural Theology.

Ray's Wisdom of God in Creation.

Dick's Christian Philosopher.

Butler (Bishop), the Analogy of Religion, Natural and
Revealed, with an Introductory Essay by the Rev. D.
Wilson.

Chalmers' Astronomical Discourses.

Dr. Olinthus Gregory's Letters to a Friend on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Duties of the Christian Religion.

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Abbott's Young Christian, corrected by the Rev. F. Cunningham.

— Way to do Good.

Adam's Private Thoughts.

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John Barnett.—London: Addison and Hodson, 210, Regent-street.

This work is invaluable, on account of the clearness with which the principles of correct singing are laid down. I strongly recommend all who are anxious to cultivate the voice to purchase it. Much can be done by its use, even without a master, by a diligent study and careful attention to the rules given. Those who have enjoyed the privilege of the talented author's instructions, will not think I speak in too high terms of his system. To young persons residing in the country, at a distance from good masters, this book will prove a safe guide, until circumstances may afford the opportunity of taking good lessons. Mr. Barnett's London address can be obtained from his publishers, Leader and Cock, 63, New Bond-street, and Addison and Hodson, 210, Regent-street.

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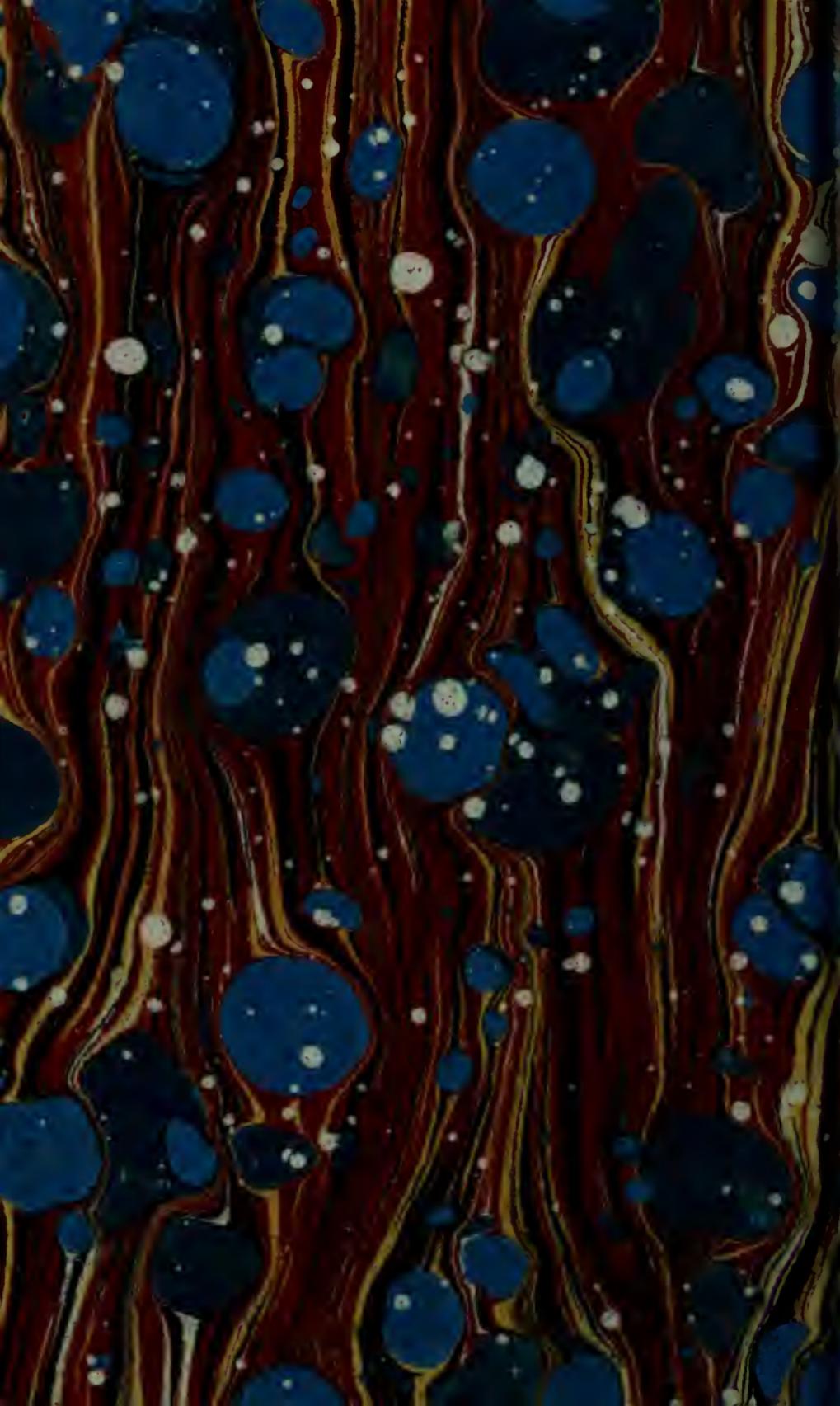
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